



Town of Arlington Select Board

Meeting Agenda

May 1, 2024
6:30 PM

Members of the public may access the hybrid meeting via Select Board Chambers, Zoom, or
ACMI

1. Legislative Provision for Remote Participation

WARRANT ARTICLE HEARINGS

2. Articles for Review:
Article 5 Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation

FINAL VOTES & COMMENTS

Articles for Review:

Article 2 Bylaw Amendment/Amend the Poet Laureate Screening Committee Membership

NEW BUSINESS

Except in cases of emergency, the Board will neither deliberate nor act upon topics presented in New Business.

Next Scheduled Meeting of Select Board May 6, 2024

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: May 1, 2024 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Select Board Meeting

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KZIVfzAUSRO2NfHDW_MATw

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

During Town Meeting starting April 24, 2023 the Select Board will be in session from 8:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by telephone dial-in information provided above.



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

Legislative Provision for Remote Participation

Warrant Article Text

ARTICLE 4 DISPOSITION OF REAL ESTATE/ACTON STREET

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to declare available for disposition a parcel of Town-owned land along the northerly side of Acton Street, and further, to authorize the Select Board to dispose of said parcel by sale, conveyance or otherwise under such terms as the Town may specify consistent with applicable legal requirements; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the Town Manager)

ARTICLE 5 RESOLUTION FOR A CEASEFIRE PROCLAMATION

To see if the Town will vote to adopt a proclamation in favor of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution for Palestinians and Israelis based upon values of dignity, equity, and justice; or take any action related there.

(Inserted at the request of Chadi Salamoun and 100 registered voters)



**Town of Arlington
Legal Department**

Michael C. Cunningham
Town Counsel

50 Pleasant Street
Arlington, MA 02476
Phone: 781.316.3150
Fax: 781.316.3159
E-mail:
mcunningham@town.arlington.ma.us
Website: www.arlingtonma.gov

To: Arlington Select Board

Cc: James Feeney, Town Manager

From: Michael C. Cunningham, Town Counsel
Jaclyn Munson, Deputy Town Counsel

Date: April 23, 2024

Re: Special Town Meeting Warrant Articles: 2 and 5

The Legal Department writes to provide the Select Board a summary of the above referenced warrant articles to assist in your consideration of these articles at your upcoming hearing on April 24, 2024.

**ARTICLE 2 BYLAW AMENDMENT / AMEND THE POET LAUREATE
SCREENING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

To see if the Town will vote to amend the membership of the Poet Laureate screening committee to automatically allow the previous Poet Laureate to be a member of that committee and to increase or decrease the number of members on the committee; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of the Poet Laureate Screening Committee)

This Article was inserted at the request of the Poet Laureate Screening Committee. It is expected that a representative from the Poet Laureate Screening Committee will present the reasoning for the submission of the proposed Bylaw amendment at the public hearing on this Article. However, it is noted that the honorary position of the Poet Laureate of the Town of Arlington was created by the 2014 Annual Town Meeting. At that time, the Select Board wrote in its report to Town Meeting that it strongly supported “the establishment of a voluntary and honorary Poet Laureate position for Arlington, continuing the Town’s support of and commitment to the arts. Members of the Board and the public voiced universal support for both recognizing and fostering the literary arts works of Town residents.”

The governing provisions for the Poet Laureate position in Arlington are set forth in Title II, Article 11 of the Town’s Bylaws. Section 2 of the Article indicates that the Poet Laureate is appointed by a screening committee consisting of five persons. The current proposed bylaw amendment would keep the screening committee’s membership at five members, but would change the membership to allow for a designee of each screening committee member to serve in that member’s place, and also replaces the member appointed by the Town Moderator to a former Poet Laureate, or a town meeting member (appointed by the Town Moderator) if no former Poet Laureate is available.

If the Select Board approves favorable action, a draft motion that could be sent to the Town Meeting may read as follows:

VOTED: that the Town does and hereby amends Title II, Article 11 of the Town’s Bylaws, or take any action related thereto, so that the new provision of Title I reads as follows:

Title II
ARTICLE 11
POET LAUREATE OF ARLINGTON
(ART. 13 – ATM – 4/30/14)

Section 1. Establishment of an Honorary Poet Laureate of Arlington

There is hereby established for the purposes of advancing the literary arts, enriching the community, and recognizing the literacy achievements of Town residents, the honorary position of Poet Laureate of Arlington.

Section 2. Selection, Term and Criteria

Appointment of a Poet Laureate shall be for a term of one year, annually renewable for a total of three years based on the recommendation of a screening committee of five persons consisting of: ~~one person each designated by:~~

- (a) A designee of ~~The~~ Library Board of Trustees (by majority vote);*
- (b) A designee of ~~The~~ Arlington School Committee (by majority vote);*
- (c) A designee of ~~The~~ Arlington Commission on Arts and Culture (by majority vote);*
- (d) ~~Town Meeting Member (appointed by the Town Moderator)~~ A former Poet Laureate starting with the most recent or a Town Meeting Member (appointed by the Town Moderator) if no former Poet Laureate is available;*
- (e) A designee of ~~The~~ Town Manager (with advice and consent of the Select Board).*

~~and confirmed by the Select Board.~~ All members shall be confirmed by the Select Board.

This honorary position shall be voluntary. Only Arlington residents shall be considered for appointment, and any person appointed as Poet Laureate of Arlington must at all times remain an Arlington resident during their term as Poet Laureate. In the event that a Poet Laureate is no longer a resident of Arlington during their term, the honorary position shall be construed to have been constructively vacated.

Section 3. Duties of Poet Laureate

The duties of the Poet Laureate shall be to present original works of poetry, conduct readings and participate in public events and Town, public school and library programs as appropriate and practicable

ARTICLE 5 RESOLUTION FOR A CEASEFIRE PROCLAMATION

To see if the Town will vote to adopt a proclamation in favor of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution for Palestinians and Israelis based upon the values of dignity, equity, and justice; or take any action related thereto.

(Inserted at the request of Chadi Salamoun and 100 registered voters)

This Article was inserted by Chadi Salamoun and one hundred registered voters. This Article seeks a non-binding resolution of Town Meeting to support a call for a ceasefire proclamation in Palestine and Israel. It is expected that the proponent will provide further details on the goals and details of the proposed resolution at the hearing on the Article.

ARTICLE RESOLUTION FOR A CEASEFIRE PROCLAMATION

To see if the Town will vote to adopt a proclamation in favor of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of lifesaving aid, and a diplomatic resolution for Palestinians and Israelis based upon values of dignity, equity, and justice; or to take any action related thereto.

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, the Town of Arlington recognizes that all human life is precious, regardless of race, ethnicity, color, religious views, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, citizenship, age, ancestry, sexual orientation and/or ability/disability, and that the targeting of civilians is a violation of international humanitarian law; and,

WHEREAS, since October 7, 2023, at least 1,200 Israelis and 33,000 Palestinians have been killed, and civilians have been deliberately targeted and continue to suffer greatly; and,

WHEREAS, hostages continue to be held captive without regard to their legal and human rights; and that thus far, the only successful effort to secure the release of a large number of hostages was through an agreed upon ceasefire in November 2023; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing violence has also led to the displacement of more than 135,000 civilians in Israel and 90,000 civilians in Lebanon; and,

WHEREAS, the ongoing military campaign and blockade of Gaza has caused a catastrophic humanitarian crisis, including the repeated displacement of more than 1.9 million people, the overwhelming destruction of the healthcare system and civilian infrastructure, and widespread hunger and famine; and

WHEREAS, international organizations such as Amnesty International, the United Nations, the World Health Organization, the US Agency for International Development (USAID), the International Rescue Committee, and many others, have made a call for a ceasefire in order to avert further loss of civilian life and to be in accordance with international humanitarian law; and,

WHEREAS, the continuing violence undermines the international order, has already killed at least four US military personnel, is central to a series of escalations that endangers civilians and US military personnel, and risks a wider war; and,

WHEREAS, taxes paid by Arlington residents are contributing to the ongoing violence and humanitarian suffering of Palestinian civilians; and,

WHEREAS, Arlington's Palestinian, Israeli, Jewish, Muslim, and Arab residents, among others, are experiencing trauma, grief, shock, and fear, compounded by increased incidents of Islamophobia, antisemitism and anti-Palestinian hate, both nationally and locally; and,

WHEREAS, we, as members of the Arlington community, must first acknowledge the particular and directly experienced pain, suffering, and anger of those among us who are most impacted by the current circumstances in Israel, Gaza, and the West Bank, and also recognize the clear impact on all members of the Arlington community as we witness the increasing scale of violence and suffering in the region;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Town of Arlington supports an immediate and permanent ceasefire across all of Gaza, the West Bank, Israel, and neighboring countries; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Arlington unequivocally condemns deliberate attacks on civilians and thereby calls for the release of all hostages and the uninhibited provision of life-saving humanitarian aid to Gaza; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Arlington supports a diplomatic solution for Palestinians and Israelis based upon the values of dignity, equity, justice, and international law; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Town of Arlington urges the Biden Administration, the Senate, and the House of Representatives to commit to an immediate and permanent ceasefire, the release of all hostages, the immediate provision of all life-saving aid, and a diplomatic solution for Palestinians and Israelis based upon international law; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this resolution be sent to the offices of The President of the United States, Joseph Biden, Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Ed Markey, and Congresswoman Katherine Clark; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that through the passing of this resolution, this Town Meeting collectively condemns all forms of racism, bigotry, and discrimination, and furthermore, that we extend our support to members of our Arlington community who are affected by this crisis, and furthermore, that we reaffirm our commitment to those bodies in Arlington which have specifically been created to foster a more equitable, just and liveable community for all in Arlington and beyond.

CEASEFIRE RESOLUTIONS PASSED IN MA

Wellfleet* ([Link](#)) March 20, 2024 (Select Board Vote: Yes: 4; No: 0; 1 recusal); Town Meeting: 05/20/2024

Somerville ([Link](#)) January 25, 2024

Cambridge ([Link](#)) January 29, 2024

Medford ([Link](#)) February 6, 2024

Northampton ([Link](#)) February 27, 2024

Amherst ([Link](#)) March 4, 2024

Melrose ([Link](#)) March 11, 2024

Greenfield ([Link](#)) March 18, 2024

Easthampton ([Link](#)) April 3, 2024

*Note: * denotes passed in Select Board meeting only*



Arlington Human Rights Commission

Report on April 2024 Listening Sessions

Background

During the Arlington Human Rights Commission (AHRC) meeting on March 20th, a number of community members attended and spoke in person or via Zoom about the ongoing destruction of life in Gaza, the widespread impact on children, reports of large-scale starvation, and the deaths of humanitarian aid workers. People spoke about the impact they felt due to personal connections, the increase in hate and rhetoric due to this war, and the importance of presenting a humanitarian viewpoint. Many appealed to the AHRC to respond appropriately and urgently, stating doing so makes people feel included and welcomed.

To consider a response, the AHRC scheduled a Special Meeting on April 1st to discuss this appeal from members of the community as well as to discuss the co-signing of a statement by another community affirming the rights of Palestinian, Arab & Muslim members of the community.

At that meeting, it was decided to hold listening sessions to gather feedback from the broader Arlington community, to answer two questions specifically:

- As an impacted member of the community, how might *other community members* make you feel more welcome, safe, and valued in Arlington?
- How might the *AHRC itself* take action to make you feel more welcome, safe, and valued in Arlington?

The intent was to identify ways the AHRC could help respond to the impact here in Arlington due to the humanitarian crisis continuing to unfold in and around Gaza.

Listening Sessions

The listening sessions were organized with the goal in mind to collect as much feedback as possible within a short period of time to be able to review, assimilate, and discuss feedback before the next AHRC meeting on April 10th. In an attempt to accommodate as many individuals and schedules as possible, we planned four separate sessions at different time slots: Thursday, 4/4, Friday, 4/5, Saturday, 4/6, and Monday, 4/8. Each session was attended by multiple members of the Commission as facilitators and notetakers. Members of the DEI department - Jillian Harvey, Teresa Marzilli, and Colleen Leger of Health and Human Services (HHS) - were also in attendance for technical coordination. Additionally, the AHRC asked people to submit written submissions to let their voices be heard if they could not attend any of the time slots listed above. These sessions were advertised via Town notice emails, the AHRC distribution list/website, and social media channels, including a variety of Arlington Facebook groups.

Feedback

The AHRC is grateful to the approximately 100 community members who spoke at the listening sessions, and those who sent over 100 emails to the AHRC before and immediately after the listening sessions, to share their stories at emotional and personal risk to themselves.

There were several notable and inspiring ideas for our community, including the following:

- Establishing a sister city in Palestine and Israel
- Hosting forums to encourage discourse and harmony
- Hold teach-ins to discuss history and increase tolerance
- Host food festivals to bring people together with a focus on unity and to promote cross-cultural understanding
- Create reading lists with input from libraries
- Create a “welcome to the town” packet that includes information about town government, civic participation and welfare programs, and promotion of local businesses.

Some common themes that were mentioned during the listening sessions were:

- Urgent calls to draft a ceasefire resolution based upon the severe humanitarian crisis in Gaza that affects a wide number of residents who are of different religions, ethnicities, and racial identities; due to the historical marginalization of Palestinian people, linked to the extensive US military & diplomatic support, and the need to speak up in a participatory democracy.
- Urgent calls to not draft a ceasefire resolution due to issues related to personal safety within Arlington, targeting of the only Jewish nation-state, linking to the traumas of the

Holocaust and pointing to the October 7 attacks as the reason for the crisis, and questioning if this falls within the purview of the AHRC.

- A number of residents requested the need for a balanced proclamation highlighting victims in Israel, destruction in Gaza, victims of Jewish, Muslim, and Christian faiths, and a call to release all hostages and prisoners and to appeal to humanity.
- Forums to respond to Islamophobia and antisemitism incidents in the town.
- A need for the AHRC to focus solely on local issues.

Many within the community were thankful to the AHRC for providing listening sessions, and some of the positive comments included:

- Appreciation for the effort involved in scheduling and hosting the listening sessions.
- An appreciation of past statements released by the AHRC on local and foreign human rights issues that make people feel included.
- Being responsive to calls from the community to respond to the crisis in Gaza.
- The opportunity to have a forum for comment, a place to be heard.

There were many critical comments about the listening sessions, and some of the notable points were:

- Pointing to the limits of AHRC's scope.
- Questioning the competence of the AHRC to comment on foreign issues.
- Not responding to antisemitic incidents in schools or in town.
- Hosting 2 of the listening sessions during the Sabbath/Shabbat.
- Questions about who is being heard in Arlington.
- Lack of responsiveness to other foreign crises.
- Concerns about the process, absence of trained facilitators, and lack of widespread publicity.
- Comments leading to an echo chamber of conflicting opinions.
- Comments about ending some sessions earlier than the stated end time.

Specifically related to the objective of the listening sessions, there was an emphasis on how the events in Israel and Gaza have impacted residents' lives in Arlington. The AHRC heard many stories of death, loss, and hopelessness from our Muslim, Arab, and Palestinian neighbors. Also heard were many stories of death, loss, and violence from our Jewish and Israeli neighbors. The AHRC was informed unequivocally that there is a pervasive sense of dehumanization and stigma surrounding religious identities that has affected members of those groups' perception of their safety here in town. The AHRC was also warned about fear of further escalation absent acknowledgement and intervention.

There were mentions of dehumanizing narratives all too common in toxic online discourse being lobbied against other groups, neighbors, and even members of the AHRC. Some of the comments included:

- Dehumanizations of Palestinians with descriptors of being a collection of tribes.
- Dismissal of a pro-Israel viewpoint as Zionist and questioning of the seriousness of antisemitic incidents in Arlington.
- Comments about Israeli victims of attacks being referenced only by people of the Jewish faith.
- Mentions of posters of October 7 hostages being torn down.
- A threat of legal action against the AHRC.
- An accusation of using antisemitic tropes and writing biased statements.
- Mentions of dehumanizing terms towards fellow Arlington residents, such as mob mentality.

After significant deliberation during the public AHRC Special Meeting on April 10th, the AHRC decided not to issue a ceasefire proclamation of its own, since that contravenes recently adopted AHRC policy against issuing statements that do not directly concern issues in Arlington.

As such, in the AHRC's desire to better serve its mission of response and education to human rights-related issues here in Arlington, the AHRC will consider the following in response:

- **Continue to convene and co-sponsor opportunities for community conversation, cultural celebration, and education, such as:**
 - Eid Mubarak event organized by the Arlington High School (AHS) Muslim Student's Association on 4/19
 - Neighbors Eating All Together (NEAT) dinner sponsorship on 4/13
 - Day of Learning, focused on building welcoming communities featuring RefugePoint on 2/10
- **Convene and co-sponsor future opportunities for conversation and education in response to Islamophobia and antisemitism, such as:**
 - Planning for a vigil or an event to address antisemitism
 - Considering cosigning a statement to affirm Arab and Muslim human rights
 - Upcoming educational session
- **Empower a new special working group of the AHRC specifically focused on promoting religious tolerance, safety, and understanding;** joining the AHRC's three other working groups, this team shall meet regularly for the duration of at least the next year to monitor and respond to incidents and the climate of religious hate in the town.
- **Provide education and awareness regarding the 2024 Special Town Meeting warrant articles related to religious violence;** the AHRC routinely provides

commentary on submitted Town Meeting warrant articles related to their impact on human rights. Submitted by community members for the 2024 Special Town Meeting, Article 5 will ask Town Meeting Members to vote on whether to issue a proclamation urging a bilateral ceasefire.

- **Review our bylaws to determine the exact scope of the AHRC in terms of making statements and comments about human rights violations around the globe;** the AHRC will break down and analyze the mission and bylaws to determine scope and purpose to guide future response, events and agendas.

Arlington values equity, diversity, and inclusion. We are committed to building a community where everyone is heard, respected, and protected.

Fwd: sbadmin@town.arlington.ma.us

Lauren Kleutsch <lauren.kleutsch@gmail.com>

Wed 4/24/2024 12:16 PM

To: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Lauren Kleutsch <lauren.kleutsch@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, Apr 23, 2024 at 10:59 AM

Subject: sbadmin@town.arlington.ma.us

To: <SDeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>, <LDiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>, Eric Helmuth <EHelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>, <JHurd@town.arlington.ma.us>, <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>

Dear members of the Select Board of Arlington,

My name is Lauren Kleutsch, and a resident of Arlington for the past ten years, along with my husband and two children. I am proud to live in this town for many reasons, among them the town's commitment to human rights and social justice.

I am writing to request that the Select Board vote in favor of a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. I don't see how any moral person can stand aside and watch as innocent civilians, among them children the age of my own, continue to be killed in horrific ways, while others witness their family and friends murdered in front of them.

Support for a ceasefire resolution would mean a great deal to the Palestinian and Palestinian-American citizens of Arlington, as well as other Muslim residents. I believe that this is an important signal of our community's commitment to racial and social justice.

I have heard from some folks that they worry that a ceasefire resolution is antisemitic. I want to challenge that framing, and explain why it is faulty logic to equate support for a permanent ceasefire with antisemitism.

I'm a public school teacher: I teach English as a Second language to immigrants and children of immigrants in upper elementary grades. As an educator, I see my role as helping children learn *how* to think, rather than simply *what* to think. We spend a lot of time engaged in critical debate, with students challenging one another's logic and expecting one another to explain their reasoning. I work to encourage nuance and complexity in their thinking. One of the phrases I use to help them understand how to go about that is, "two things can be true." That is, seemingly opposing facts or perspectives can exist simultaneously.

With a framework of "two things can be true," I want to remind you of the following:

You can have enormous empathy for the 1,200 Israeli victims of the October 7th attack AND reject the notion that the events of that day justify the disproportionate response by Israel that has killed over 30,000 Palestinians, among them 10,000 innocent children. You can want the return of the hostages held by Hamas, while also believing that blocking the delivery of food and medical aid, destroying medical facilities, and targeting humanitarian aid workers is cruel. You can even be a Zionist, and believe in Israel's right to exist, and STILL take issue with the IDF's relentless violence against Palestinian civilians.

My point is here that you can set aside political questions about who has the original claim to the land, to speak out against what is undeniably a violation of international human rights. To support a ceasefire proclamation is not antisemitic, and those who would have you believe that its are engaging in a logical fallacy. To support a ceasefire is to stand up for international human rights, and to be on the right side of history. That is what our town must do.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critical matter. ****Please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Thank you for your time,
Lauren Kleutsch
24 Brattle St.
Arlington MA 02476

Comment on ceasefire resolution

Christina Ahmad <christina.bates@gmail.com>

Wed 4/24/2024 12:10 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Please attach my letter to the agenda as a public comment.

Dear Members of the Select Board,

My name is Christina Ahmad. I am originally from Lowell, MA and have resided in Arlington with my husband and young children for 10 years. I'm writing to convey the significance of an Arlington ceasefire resolution from the perspective of a proud American, parent, and Christian.

Although my family is American of Palestinian descent through my husband, the reason I believe it is worthwhile for Arlington to issue a ceasefire resolution is to pressure our elected officials to quit slow walking our nation, the United States of America, into a world war. The consequences of escalating the war on Gaza will be long-lasting for Americans who will have had their economic, military, and political might stolen by foreign interests and powerful elites. Furthermore, it is American sons and daughters who will be on the front lines giving their lives in a war that will destroy America's credibility and open our nation to retaliatory attacks. American troops are already in harm's way as they sit in bases across the Middle East, including in the country of Jordan where I have observed the massive U.S. military presence myself.

My concern is also for Gazans, so many of them children, who are suffering catastrophic losses and are in imminent danger to life and limb. As a parent, it is abhorrent to me that American wealth and influence is being used to punish Palestinians who have committed no crime against the United States of America. An estimated 14,000 children have been killed. About 1,000 have had limbs amputated as the result of airstrikes. Scores more have been badly maimed. The deaths include 7 children at St. Porphyrios Greek Orthodox Church who were crushed under a building on the church grounds with 11 members of their family in a confirmed Israeli airstrike after the IDF learned the church was giving shelter to Muslims neighbors in addition to parishioners.

I wish everyone had the opportunity to spend time with Palestinian families, as I have, to see how very committed and gentle the fathers are to their children. Palestinian men in Gaza are presumed to be terrorists by virtue of their age and gender and are marked for execution. The loss of the father is catastrophic for families. So, too, is the death of the mothers, many of them pregnant. Breastfeeding women have been killed in airstrikes, the babies losing their mother and her milk. I have seen children screaming for their dead mothers to come back. The trauma of those losses will haunt Palestinian children and the world order for decades to come.

At Holy Family Catholic Church, a mother and daughter were murdered by Israeli snipers as they crossed the church compound's courtyard on their way to the bathroom. Another woman sheltering at the Catholic church was shot in the leg by an Israeli sniper. Members of the church who tried to help her were shot at as well. She bled to death on the road overnight.

It is not lost on me, a Greek Orthodox Christian resident of Arlington, that the political class of the United States watches as Christians disappear from the Holy Land. It is chilling that the justification for not saving our Christian brethren is that the existence of Palestinians threatens the safety of Jewish people, or that our Jewish neighbors feel threatened by assertions that the people of Gaza deserve life and aid.

Please allow the residents of Arlington to put on record for our elected representatives the urgent need to preserve life and liberty with a ceasefire in Gaza. The wellbeing of our town and nation depends on it.

Thank you,

Christina Ahmad

17 Park Circle, Arlington MA

April 24, 2024

Dear Members of the Arlington Select Board,

I have been to Palestine once, in 2016, as part of a delegation organized by Interfaith Peace Builders (now Eyewitness Palestine). Our hosts were both Israelis and Palestinians who were striving for an end to the systemic mistreatment of the indigenous people. In one of our many stops, we saw how water was being redirected to a settlement, leaving little if any for the nearby village. In Hebron we saw a net in a market area which Palestinians had put up to block and collect the garbage thrown down at them by the settlers living above.

Two of us in the delegation arrived half a day early, and were sitting outside a cafe, around the corner from our hotel in E. Jerusalem. An elderly Arab man approached us and warmly welcomed us to Jerusalem. By coincidence, he turned out to be a friend of (now) my partner Patricia, who has traveled to Palestine many times. "Haj Ibrahim" as he is called, lives in the Mount of Olives region. His Bedouin family has lived there for hundreds of years and have a tradition of welcoming visitors to the city. For years Ibrahim hosted them at his ancestral "Peace House" - giving them a place to sleep and some food for several days, for free. Now in his 80s, he added a second floor, for himself and his wife, to a home he had built for his son, some years ago. The Israeli municipality fined him several hundred thousand dollars for permit violations (a common way of harassing Palestinians). Of this he can pay but a fraction, and is being threatened with prison. Home demolition is a recurring menace. He's frequently in court and the stress has taken a serious toll on his health. Both of his parents lived past 100, but he is unlikely to. He calls occasionally to say hello, and we hear of his latest mistreatment.

Ibrahim's mistreatment is a travesty but it pales next to what is happening in Gaza. Anyone with a television knows of the ongoing slaughter, courtesy of the U.S. taxpayer.

Yesterday, April 23, however, marks (perhaps) a new low in our involvement. Congress approved a \$26B "aid" package for Israel, of which \$17B is for weapons and other military provisions. That amounts to over **\$2600 for every Israeli man, woman and child**. Yet Israel is a wealthy country, ranking #11 in per capita - better than Canada, Germany and the UK.

There is much more than financial incongruity involved in this giveaway. The death and destruction inflicted on Gaza is being done as much by our hand as by that of Israel. The outrage around the world is certain to backfire on us eventually. (Recall 9-11.)

Domestically, we are seeing an outpouring of anger against the Biden administration, coming from the Democratic base (75% of which disapproves of Biden's Gaza policy), especially younger people. The resulting alienation could well cost Biden the election in November. **This will affect every one of us in Arlington.** And the blame will lie not on "spoilers" or those who sit out the election, but rather on Biden's genocidal policy in Gaza.

I urge the Select Board to favorably recommend the *Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation*.

Sincerely,
Noble Larson
15 Lewis Avenue
Arlington, MA 02474
(Arlington resident for over 50 years.)

Arlington Ceasefire Proclamation

Noble Larson <nlarson781@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 11:16 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

 4 attachments (306 KB)

Letter_to_Select_Board_re_Ceasefire_proclamation_22April2024.pdf; The-Iron-Wall-Jabotinsky_4Nov1923.pdf; Excerpts from the British Peel Commission Report of 1937.pdf; NYT_Letter_Einstein_et_al_Dec1948_transcribed.pdf;

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Members of the Arlington Select Board,

Attached is a letter I am submitting for your consideration, regarding the current proposal for an Arlington Ceasefire Proclamation:

Letter_to_Select_Board_re_Ceasefire_proclamation_22April2024.pdf

My letter references several very short historical documents, also attached:

The-Iron-Wall-Jabotinsky_4Nov1923.pdf

Excerpts from the British Peel Commission Report of 1937.pdf

NYT_Letter_Einstein_et_al_Dec1948_transcribed.pdf

These documents, I believe, shed considerable light on the predicament in which our country now finds itself.

I would appreciate my letter and the other 3 attachments being put in the record of this discussion in our Town.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Noble Larson

15 Lewis Avenue

Arlington, MA 02474

(Town resident since 1973)

April 22, 2024

Dear Members of the Arlington Select Board,

I wrote to the Arlington Human Rights Commission on March 31st and also spoke at the April 8th listening session. I will summarize and expand a bit on a few of the points I made in that letter and at the session. Moreover, I feel obliged to respond to several statements made by other speakers during the April 8th and prior listening sessions.

Simon Proekt asserted that a statement re Ceasefire in Gaza is outside the scope of the AHRC. I disagree. Human rights are universal and indivisible. They cannot be ignored in the national or world context without rendering them empty when applied locally. Indeed the AHRC website states (re Ongoing Repression of the Muslim Community in India):

As a home to many people with connections across the world and as a community that wants to contribute to global conversations, Arlington cannot ignore issues that seriously affect human rights around the world.

I believe Mr. Proekt also stated that a proclamation by the Commission would have little if any consequence in Gaza. It can be said that our individual votes have little effect on elections. Should we therefore not bother to go to the polls? A ceasefire proclamation would amplify similar statements passed in many Massachusetts *cities* and be the first in one of its *towns*. (I believe Mr. Proekt later wrapped himself in an Israeli flag during the Zoom session – an ironic, if not comic touch, given his contention that foreign events were outside the scope of those sessions.)

Claims of skyrocketing anti-Semitism were made on April 8th. Unfortunately, there has been an ongoing effort for years to equate this deplorable sentiment with criticism of the state of Israel. A “working definition” of anti-Semitism, drafted by American Jewish Committee (AJC), under the banner (contested, incidentally) of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) explicitly does this. The “IHRA definition” has been pushed through some state legislatures, despite its lead author (Kenneth Stern) decrying its use in this way. Consequently, when Israel acts in deplorable or criminal ways, criticism of it and therefore (alleged) “anti-Semitism” increases.

We heard related logic that night from a speaker who insisted that Israel and “Jews” were inseparable. I have *many* Jewish friends who would counter that such a linkage is *itself* fundamentally anti-Semitic. For it effectively places responsibility for Israel’s actions on the shoulders of *all* Jews. (Historical note: the AJC itself was once anti-Zionist.)

Israel has been accused of plausible genocide (ICJ ruling) and many around the world, including in this country, consider it to be actual genocide. But I find this inaccurate. Rather *the United States and Israel* are committing genocide in Gaza. The ongoing massacre in Gaza would not be possible without the weaponry and aircraft to deploy it provided by the U.S. and, even more important, the political cover provided in the UN through numerous U.S. vetoes of Security Council resolutions, including for ceasefires. What makes this more horrific is that it is being done to a trapped people. I have followed politics for most of my life, and can recall nothing comparable to the viciousness of this slaughter. And I can think of few things more likely to fuel hatred of Israelis, Americans, and Jews, around the world, especially in the Global South (which, incidentally, surrounds Israel).

The preposterous assertion was made that the “IDF” is exemplary in its efforts to avoid civilian casualties. This can only make sense in an “inverted world” where evil is good and genocide is acceptable. Many eyewitnesses and numerous media sources have documented the intentional carnage, devastation, killings of journalists, and imposed starvation being inflicted on Gaza.

We hear repeatedly that Hamas is a terrorist organization. It certainly uses the methods of “asymmetric warfare” and, *to be sure, the murder and kidnapping of civilians is a war crime*. Recall, though, that three of Israel’s founders (Ben Gurion, Begin and Shamir) were the leaders of terrorist militias (Haganah, Irgun and Stern Gang, respectively). These organizations committed innumerable terrorist acts and atrocities, including the assassination of British Lord Moyne (1944), the bombing of the King David Hotel (1946), the assassination of Count Bernadotte and the slaughter of between 110-250 people in Deir Yassin and (both in 1948), to name just a few. (Ironically, Bernadotte had been instrumental in saving thousands of Jews during the Holocaust but these actions didn’t spare him.) Following the declaration of the State of Israel in 1948 these three terrorist militias merged into a single military entity. Right; it is called the Israeli *Defense Force*.

The discussion at hand is inextricably tied to the “Palestine question”. The literature and commentary on the latter are voluminous, and I have attached several short documents of interest. Revisionist (i.e., political) Zionism appears on the historical stage in the 1920s. Its founder, Ze’ev Jabotinsky, wrote a key document, *The Iron Wall* (1923), explaining that Zionism was a settler colonial project, and that the “native population” would resist it with “ferocity”. Its scant 7 pages comprise an instructive read. (Jabotinsky was at least honest.)

I’ve also attached an excerpt from another key historic document, the British Peel Commission report of 1937. The latter describes the motives behind the British Balfour Declaration of 1917 – a *quid pro quo*, promising Palestine to the Zionists in exchange for support from American Jews for the British war effort – which was not going well at the time of the Declaration’s conception.

And I’ve attached a famous open letter, published in 1948 in the New York Times, by Albert Einstein, Hannah Arendt, Sidney Hook, and 24 other Jewish intellectuals, decrying Revisionist leader Menachem Begin’s *Herut* party as akin to Nazi and Fascist parties. *Herut* was later re-branded as Likud, the party of Netanyahu.

In the words of William Faulkner: “The past is never dead. It isn't even past.”

On February 25th, shortly before immolating himself in protest of the ongoing massacres in Gaza, Air Force serviceman Aaron Bushnell posed a question for all of us: “What would I do if my country was committing genocide?” The answer is, you're doing it. Right now.”

As our country drives itself deeper and deeper into a moral abyss, to which our Congress appears oblivious, citizens and local governments must speak out. **Accordingly, I urge the Select Board to approve a town proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.**

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Noble Larson

15 Lewis Avenue

Arlington, MA

(Resident of Arlington for over 50 years and property owner/tax payer since 1979)



The Iron Wall

Original in Russian, Razsviet, 4.11.1923

Colonisation of Palestine

Agreement with Arabs Impossible at present

Zionism Must Go Forward

It is an excellent rule to begin an article with the most important point. But this time, I find it necessary to begin with an introduction, and, moreover, with a personal introduction.

I am reputed to be an enemy of the Arabs, who wants to have them ejected from Palestine, and so forth. It is not true.

Emotionally, my attitude to the Arabs is the same as to all other nations – polite indifference. Politically, my attitude is determined by two principles. First of all, I consider it utterly impossible to eject the Arabs from Palestine. There will always be *two* nations in Palestine – which is good enough for me, provided the Jews become the majority. And secondly, I belong to the group that once drew up the Helsingfors Programme, the programme of national rights for all nationalities living in the same State. In drawing up that programme, we had in mind not only the Jews, but all nations everywhere, and its basis is equality of rights.

I am prepared to take an oath binding ourselves and our descendants that we shall never do anything contrary to the principle of equal rights, and that we shall never try to eject anyone. This seems to me a fairly peaceful credo.

But it is quite another question whether it is always possible to realise a peaceful aim by peaceful means. For the answer to this question does not depend on our attitude to the Arabs; but entirely on the attitude of the Arabs to us and to Zionism.



Now, after this introduction, we may proceed to the subject.

Voluntary Agreement Not Possible.

There can be no voluntary agreement between ourselves and the Palestine Arabs. Not now, nor in the prospective future. I say this with such conviction, not because I want to hurt the moderate Zionists. I do not believe that they will be hurt. Except for those who were born blind, they realised long ago that it is utterly impossible to obtain the voluntary consent of the Palestine Arabs for converting "Palestine" from an Arab country into a country with a Jewish majority.

My readers have a general idea of the history of colonisation in other countries. I suggest that they consider all the precedents with which they are acquainted, and see whether there is one solitary instance of any colonisation being carried on with the consent of the native population. There is no such precedent.

The native populations, civilised or uncivilised, have always stubbornly resisted the colonists, irrespective of whether they were civilised or savage.

And it made no difference whatever whether the colonists behaved decently or not. The companions of Cortez and Pizzaro or (as some people will remind us) our own ancestors under Joshua Ben Nun, behaved like brigands; but the Pilgrim Fathers, the first real pioneers of North America, were people of the highest morality, who did not want to do harm to anyone, least of all to the Red Indians, and they honestly believed that there was room enough in the prairies both for the Paleface and the Redskin. Yet the native population fought with the same ferocity against the good colonists as against the bad.

Every native population, civilised or not, regards its lands as its national home, of which it is the sole master, and it wants to retain that mastery always; it will refuse to admit not only new masters but, even new partners or collaborators.



Arabs Not Fools

This is equally true of the Arabs. Our Peace-mongers are trying to persuade us that the Arabs are either fools, whom we can deceive by masking our real aims, or that they are corrupt and can be bribed to abandon to us their claim to priority in Palestine, in return for cultural and economic advantages. I repudiate this conception of the Palestinian Arabs. Culturally they are five hundred years behind us, they have neither our endurance nor our determination; but they are just as good psychologists as we are, and their minds have been sharpened like ours by centuries of fine-spun logomachy. We may tell them whatever we like about the innocence of our aims, watering them down and sweetening them with honeyed words to make them palatable, but they know what we want, as well as we know what they do not want. They feel at least the same instinctive jealous love of Palestine, as the old Aztecs felt for ancient Mexico, and their Sioux for their rolling Prairies.

To imagine, as our Arabophiles do, that they will voluntarily consent to the realisation of Zionism. In return for the moral and material conveniences which the Jewish colonist brings with him, is a childish notion, which has at bottom a kind of contempt for the Arab people; it means that they despise the Arab race, which they regard as a corrupt mob that can be bought and sold, and are willing to give up their fatherland for a good railway system.

All Natives Resist Colonists

There is no justification for such a belief. It may be that some individual Arabs take bribes. But that does not mean that the Arab people of Palestine as a whole will sell that fervent patriotism that they guard so jealously, and which even the Papuans will never sell. Every native population in the world resists colonists as long as it has the slightest hope of being able to rid itself of the danger of being colonised.



That is what the Arabs in Palestine are doing, and what they will persist in doing as long as there remains a solitary spark of hope that they will be able to prevent the transformation of "Palestine" into the "Land of Israel."

Arab Comprehension

Some of us have induced ourselves to believe that all the trouble is due to misunderstanding – the Arabs have not understood us, and that is the only reason why they resist us ;if we can only make it clear to them how moderate our intentions really are, they will immediately extend to us their hand in friendship.

This belief is utterly unfounded and it has been exploded again and again. I shall recall only one instance of many. A few years ago, when the late Mr. Sokolow was on one of his periodic visits to Palestine, he addressed a meeting on this very question of the "misunderstanding." He demonstrated lucidly and convincingly that the Arabs are terribly mistaken if they think that we have any desire to deprive them of their possessions or to drive them out of the country, or that we want to oppress them. We do not even ask for a Jewish Government to hold the Mandate of the League of Nations.

One of the Arab papers, "El Carmel," replied at the time, in an editorial article, the purport of which was this:

The Zionists are making a fuss about nothing. There is no misunderstanding. All that Mr. Sokolow says about the Zionist intentions is true, but the Arabs know that without him. Of course, the Zionists cannot now be thinking of driving the Arabs out of the country, or oppressing them, not do they contemplate a Jewish Government. Quite obviously, they are now concerned with one thing only- that the Arabs should not hinder their immigration. The Zionists assure us that even immigration will be regulated strictly according to the economic needs of Palestine. The Arabs have never doubted that: it is a truism, for otherwise there can be no immigration.



No "Misunderstanding"

This Arab editor was actually willing to agree that Palestine has a very large potential absorptive capacity, meaning that there is room for a great many Jews in the country without displacing a single Arab. There is only one thing the Zionists want, and it is that one thing that the Arabs do not want, for that is the way by which the Jews would gradually become the majority, and then a Jewish Government would follow automatically, and the future of the Arab minority would depend on the goodwill of the Jews; and a minority status is not a good thing, as the Jews themselves are never tired of pointing out. So there is no "misunderstanding".

The Zionists want only one thing, Jewish immigration; and this Jewish immigration is what the Arabs do not want.

This statement of the position by the Arab editor is so logical, so obvious, so indisputable, that everyone ought to know it by heart, and it should be made the basis of all our future discussions on the Arab question. It does not matter at all which phraseology we employ in explaining our colonising aims, Herzl's or Sir Herbert Samuel's.

Colonisation carries its own explanation, the only possible explanation, unalterable and as clear as daylight to every ordinary Jew and every ordinary Arab.

Colonisation can have only one aim, and Palestine Arabs cannot accept this aim. It lies in the very nature of things, and in this particular regard nature cannot be changed.

The Iron Wall

We cannot offer any adequate compensation to the Palestinian Arabs in return for Palestine. And therefore, there is no likelihood of any voluntary agreement being reached. So that all those who regard such an agreement as a condition sine qua non for Zionism may as well say "non" and withdraw from Zionism.



Zionist colonisation must either stop, or else proceed regardless of the native population. Which means that it can proceed and develop only under the protection of a power that is independent of the native population – behind an iron wall, which the native population cannot breach.

That is our Arab policy; not what we should be, but what it actually is, whether we admit it or not. What need, otherwise, of the Balfour Declaration? Or of the Mandate? Their value to us is that outside Power has undertaken to create in the country such conditions of administration and security that if the native population should desire to hinder our work, they will find it impossible.

And we are all of us, without any exception, demanding day after day that this outside Power, should carry out this task vigorously and with determination.

In this matter there is no difference between our "militarists" and our "vegetarians". Except that the first prefer that the iron wall should consist of Jewish soldiers, and the others are content that they should be British.

We all demand that there should be an iron wall. Yet we keep spoiling our own case, by talking about "agreement" which means telling the Mandatory Government that the important thing is not the iron wall, but discussions. *Empty rhetoric of this kind is dangerous.* And that is why it is not only a pleasure but a duty to discredit it and to demonstrate that it is both fantastic and dishonest.

Zionism Moral and Just

Two brief remarks:

In the first place, if anyone objects that this point of view is immoral, I answer: It is not true: either Zionism is moral and just, or it is immoral and unjust. But that is a question that we should have settled before we became Zionists. Actually we have settled that question, and in the affirmative.



We hold that Zionism is moral and just. And since it is moral and just, justice must be done, no matter whether Joseph or Simon or Ivan or Achmet agree with it or not.

There is no other morality.

Eventual Agreement

In the second place, this does not mean that there cannot be any agreement with the Palestine Arabs. What is impossible is a voluntary agreement. As long as the Arabs feel that there is the least hope of getting rid of us, they will refuse to give up this hope in return for either kind words or for bread and butter, because they are not a rabble, but a living people. And when a living people yields in matters of such a vital character it is only when there is no longer any hope of getting rid of us, because they can make no breach in the iron wall. Not till then will they drop their extremist leaders whose watchword is "Never!" And the leadership will pass to the moderate groups, who will approach us with a proposal that we should both agree to mutual concessions. Then we may expect them to discuss honestly practical questions, such as a guarantee against Arab displacement, or equal rights for Arab citizen, or Arab national integrity.

And when that happens, I am convinced that we Jews will be found ready to give them satisfactory guarantees, so that both peoples can live together in peace, like good neighbours.

But the only way to obtain such an agreement, is the iron wall, which is to say a strong power in Palestine that is not amenable to any Arab pressure. In other words, the only way to reach an agreement in the future is to abandon all idea of seeking an agreement at present.

Excerpts from the British Peel Commission Report (1937)

13. The entry of the Turkish Empire into the War excited the hopes of Jewish as well as Arab nationalism. An Allied victory, it seemed, would open the way to a Jewish return to Palestine on a far larger scale than had hitherto been regarded as practicable. The Zionist leaders, therefore, incorporated their ideas in a definite scheme to be submitted to the Allied Governments at the first favourable moment. One serious obstacle in their path the opposition of the Czarist Russian Government, was losing its force by the end of 1916; and in February, 1917, **when the British advance on Palestine was imminent, formal negotiations were opened between the Zionists and the British Government.** Similar negotiations ensued with the French and Italian Governments. **In Paris and Rome as in London the Zionist project was officially approved. The publication of this approval was delayed till at the end of October, 1917, the success of General Allenby's invasion of Palestine seemed certain. On the 2nd November the British Government published a statement of policy, afterwards known as the "Balfour Declaration", which took the form of a letter from Mr. Balfour, then Secretary Of State for Foreign Affairs, to Lord Rothschild : -**

"I have much pleasure in conveying to you on behalf of His Majesty's Government the following declaration of sympathy with Jewish Zionist aspirations, which has been submitted to and approved by the Cabinet:

'His Majesty's government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish which may communities in Palestine, or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.'

I should be grateful if you would bring this declaration to the knowledge of the Zionist Federation."

15. Like the McMahon Pledge, the Balfour Declaration was not an expression of a wholly new sentiment. Just as British public opinion had sympathized before the War with the victims of the old Ottoman regime, so it had sympathized with the victims of anti-Semitic persecution. But in both cases the time and manner in which these sympathies were translated into action were determined by the exigencies of the War. In the evidence he gave before us **Mr. Lloyd George, who was Prime Minister at the time, stated that, while the Zionist cause had been widely supported in Britain and America before November, 1917, the launching of the Balfour Declaration at that time was "due to propagandist reasons"; and, he outlined the serious position in which the Allied and Associated Powers then were.**

The Roumanians had been crushed. The Russian Army was demoralized. The French Army was unable at the moment to take the offensive on a large scale. The Italians had sustained a great defeat at Caporetto. Millions of tons of British shipping had been sunk by German submarines. No American divisions were yet available in the trenches. In this critical situation it was believed that Jewish sympathy or the reverse would make a substantial difference one way or the other to the Allied cause. **In particular Jewish sympathy would confirm the support of American Jewry, and would make it more difficult for Germany to reduce her military commitments and improve her economic position on the eastern front.**

16. Those were the circumstances in which the British Government issued the Balfour Declaration.

"The Zionist leaders [Mr. Lloyd George informed us] gave us a definite promise that, if the Allies committed themselves to giving facilities for the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine, they would do their best to rally Jewish sentiment and support throughout the world to the Allied cause. They kept their word."

17. To inform World Jewry of the Declaration millions of leaflets were circulated throughout the Jewish communities. They were dropped from the air on **German and Austrian towns**, and widely distributed through the Jewish belt from Poland to the Black Sea.

18. The Central Powers, meantime, had also recognized the war-value of Jewish sympathy. At the time of the Balfour Declaration the German Government was doing all it could to win the Zionist Movement over to its side; and after the Declaration it hastened, in conjunction with its Turkish allies, to formulate a rival proposition. A kind of chartered company was to be created for German Zionists. It would have a limited form of local self-government and a right of immigration into Palestine. By the end of 1917 it was known that the Turks were willing to accept a scheme on those lines; but, before the concessions were finally confirmed in Constantinople, Palestine was in General Allenby's hands.

19. The fact that the Balfour Declaration was issued in 1917 in order to enlist Jewish support for the Allies and the fact that this support was forthcoming are not sufficiently appreciated in Palestine. The Arabs do not appear to realize in the first place that the present position of the Arab world as a whole is mainly due to the great sacrifices made by the Allied and Associated Powers in the War and, secondly, that, in so far as the Balfour Declaration helped to bring about the Allies' victory, it helped to bring about the emancipation of all the Arab countries from Turkish rule. If the Turks and their German allies had won the War, it is improbable that all the Arab countries, except Palestine, would now have become or be about to become independent States.

New Palestine Party

Visit of Menachen Begin and Aims of Political Movement Discussed

TO THE EDITORS OF NEW YORK TIMES:

Among the most disturbing political phenomena of our times is the emergence in the newly created state of Israel of the "Freedom Party" (Tnuat HaHerut), a political party closely akin in its organization, methods, political philosophy and social appeal to the Nazi and Fascist parties. It was formed out of the membership and following of the former Irgun Zvai Leumi, a terrorist, right-wing, chauvinist organization in Palestine.

The current visit of Menachem Begin, leader of this party, to the United States is obviously calculated to give the impression of American support for his party in the coming Israeli elections, and to cement political ties with conservative Zionist elements in the United States. Several Americans of national repute have lent their names to welcome his visit. It is inconceivable that those who oppose fascism throughout the world, if correctly informed as to Mr. Begin's political record and perspectives, could add their names and support to the movement he represents.

Before irreparable damage is done by way of financial contributions, public manifestations in Begin's behalf, and the creation in Palestine of the impression that a large segment of America supports Fascist elements in Israel, the American public must be informed as to the record and objectives of Mr. Begin and his movement.

The public avowals of Begin's party are no guide whatever to its actual character. Today they speak of freedom, democracy and anti-imperialism, whereas until recently they openly preached the doctrine of the Fascist state. It is in its actions that the terrorist party betrays its real character; from its past actions we can judge what it may be expected to do in the future.

Attack on Arab Village

A shocking example was their behavior in the Arab village of Deir Yassin. This village, off the main roads and surrounded by Jewish lands, had taken no part in the war, and had even fought off Arab bands who wanted to use the village as their base. On April 9 (THE NEW YORK TIMES), terrorist bands attacked this peaceful village, which was not a military objective in the fighting, killed most of its inhabitants (240 men, women, and children) and kept a few of them alive to parade as captives through the streets of Jerusalem. Most of the Jewish community was horrified at the deed, and the Jewish Agency sent a telegram of apology to King Abdullah of Trans-Jordan. But the terrorists, far from being ashamed of their act, were proud of this massacre, publicized it widely, and invited all the foreign correspondents present in the country to view the heaped corpses and the general havoc at Deir Yassin.

The Deir Yassin incident exemplifies the character and actions of the Freedom Party.

Within the Jewish community they have preached an admixture of ultranationalism, religious mysticism, and racial superiority. Like other Fascist parties they have been used to break strikes, and have themselves pressed for the destruction of free trade unions. In their stead they have proposed corporate unions on the Italian Fascist model.

During the last years of sporadic anti-British violence, the IZL and Stern groups inaugurated a reign of terror in the Palestine Jewish community. Teachers were beaten up for speaking against them, adults were shot for not letting their children join them. By gangster methods, beatings, window-smashing, and wide-spread robberies, the terrorists intimidated the population and exacted a heavy tribute.

The people of the Freedom Party have had no part in the constructive achievements in Palestine. They have reclaimed no land, built no settlements, and only detracted from the Jewish defense activity. Their much-publicized immigration endeavors were minute, and devoted mainly to bringing in Fascist compatriots.

Discrepancies Seen

The discrepancies between the bold claims now being made by Begin and his party, and their record of past performance in Palestine bear the imprint of no ordinary political party. This is the unmistakable stamp of a Fascist party for whom terrorism (against Jews, Arabs, and British alike), and misrepresentation are means, and a "Leader State" is the goal.

In the light of the foregoing considerations, it is imperative that the truth about Mr. Begin and his movement be made known in this country. It is all the more tragic that the top leadership of American Zionism has refused to campaign against Begin's efforts, or even to expose to its own constituents the dangers to Israel from support to Begin.

The undersigned therefore take this means of publicly presenting a few salient facts concerning Begin and his party; and of urging all concerned not to support this latest manifestation of fascism.

ISIDORE ABRAMOWITZ,
HANNAH ARENDT,
ABRAHAM BRICK,
RABBI JESSURUN CARDOZO,
ALBERT EINSTEIN,
HERMAN EISEN, M.D.,
HAYIM FINEMAN, M. GALLEN, M.D.,
H.H. HARRIS,
ZELIG S. HARRIS,
SIDNEY HOOK,
FRED KARUSH,
BRURIA KAUFMAN,
IRMA L. LINDHEIM,
NACHMAN MAISEL,
SEYMOUR MELMAN,
MYER D. MENDELSON, M.D.,
HARRY M. OSLINSKY,
SAMUEL PITLICK,
FRITZ ROHRLICH,
LOUIS P. ROCKER,
RUTH SAGIS,
ITZHAK SANKOWSKY,
I.J. SHOENBERG,
SAMUEL SHUMAN,
M. SINGER,
IRMA WOLFE,
STEFAN WOLFE.

New York, Dec. 2, 1948

Hello,

My name is Maile Blume, and I am writing to request that the Select Board vote in favor of a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

With other members of the Arlington community, I am also calling for Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop funding military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As a resident of Arlington, I deeply believe that Arlington should be a town where our neighbors who are being most impacted by the ongoing genocide feel protected and supported by our community in the face of the atrocious violence we are continuing to witness every day in Gaza. We have a responsibility to all of the individuals and families who are continuing to suffer unending attacks on their lives and futures. My heart goes out to all those who are continuing to live under these conditions and to our neighbors who have family and loved ones in Gaza. I ask that you think of these families as you make your vote today.

All human lives are worthy of protection, and I ask you to please do what you can to end this ongoing genocide. We are looking to you as leaders in positions of power to do the right thing, and use your power to protect human life and prevent more people from being killed.

As a local journalist, I have been saddened by the silence of our state and country in the face of this heavy and terrible violence; this genocide that our tax dollars are supporting. I have also felt hope at watching our community come together to call for an end to this genocide. It is important that we recognize that other cities and towns around us have passed or are also in the process of passing ceasefire resolutions, providing an opportunity for Massachusetts to come together as a state to say that we value human life and are doing everything we can to end this violence. Please, be a part of this change and vote with the people of Gaza and Arlington in mind.

Thank you.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Ceasefire Resolution

Samantha Hurley Doucet <sjhdoucet@gmail.com>

Wed 4/24/2024 9:23 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

My name is Samantha Doucet, and I am writing to request that you vote in support of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

As an Arlington resident, parent, social worker, and member of the Jewish community, I urge you to take steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. In the wake of increasing violence in Gaza and the deaths of over 34,000 Palestinians, we must take action. The time is now.

Gaza may be far but the connection to Arlington is not distant. It is imperative that we show support to Arlington residents of Palestinian descent, many with family in Gaza, by passing a Ceasefire Resolution.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Thank you,

Samantha Doucet, LCSW, MEd

Arlington Select Board Ceasefire Resolution Review

Hannah Barber Doucet <hannahbethbarber@gmail.com>

Wed 4/24/2024 9:20 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

My name is Hannah Barber Doucet, and I am writing to request that the Arlington Select Board vote in support of the resolution for a ceasefire proclamation.

I am an Arlington resident, and as a pediatrician, a Jewish person, and a human, the death and suffering in Gaza is unbearable for us to stand by and do nothing. We may be only a town, but we still have the ability to use the voice we have to continue to put pressure on our government and others for a ceasefire, as other local towns already have. I urge the board to adopt this resolution and continue to apply pressure upwards.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Hannah Barber Doucet, MD, MPH [*she/hers*]

Pediatric Emergency Medicine, Boston Medical Center

Assistant Professor, Boston University School of Medicine

April 23, 2024

Select Board Hearing

Remarks of David Emer in opposition to Article 5 Resolution for A Ceasefire Proclamation

37 Windsor St.

Arlington, MA

I would like to thank the Select Board for recognizing me. I rise in opposition to the proposed resolution for a ceasefire. I'd like to make three brief points.

First, I firmly believe that there are people of good faith on both sides of this issue. Since October 7, I have reached out to people with whom I vehemently disagree on the Israel-Hamas war. I encourage you to do so too. The challenges facing this town – hunger, the lack of affordable housing, inadequate teacher pay, among many others – are too great to set aside because of our disagreements on this resolution. We must work together and live together peacefully.

Along those lines, my second point is that we should focus on the local effects of October 7 and combatting hate generally. In May 2019, a man set fire to the Chabad House on Lake Street. That man attempted to burn children of our community alive. At my daughter's elementary school, there has been hate directed – not at her to my knowledge – but at children who are Jewish and Muslim alike. As a community, we must work to confront these incidents to make Arlington a safe and welcoming place for all. That's where our focus should be.

Third, I feel compelled to address the underlying merits of the resolution. I have family in Israel. Again, fortunately, they were not victims of the October 7 attack. Now, I don't want to be misunderstood. I have grave concerns about the manner in which Netanyahu is conducting this war. I abhor war. As a college student, I went to D.C. to protest the unjust Iraq war. Today, with a world on fire, I pray that our leaders have the fortitude to prevent a regional or even world war.

That being said, a ceasefire is not a solution that will keep my family in Israel safe. This war will end. It will end when Hamas unconditionally surrenders. Hamas's indiscriminate killing of children, sexual violence, and abduction of civilian hostages, means that Hamas cannot remain in power. Hamas kidnapped babies. Its eradication is an issue of basic morality. I urge the Select Board to oppose this resolution.

Select Board Members, ***please attach this to the agenda as public comments. Thank You.***

I, like many of you and my friends and acquaintances in Arlington have been horrified by the daily media reports of the killing of children, women, elderly, innocent sons, brothers, and husbands, entire families, in Gaza. This---what other countries and professionals, and political leaders have called "genocide"--- is happening far away from those of us living in Arlington; yet we all, as ethical, moral, compassionate human beings feel deeply moved and desperate to end the many months of ongoing daily destruction of homes, municipal buildings, schools. and hospitals, along with the killing of doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, rescue workers, reporters, and civilians attempting to aid those wounded or buried under the rubble of bombed houses. Other towns and cities in Massachusetts and throughout the USA have felt that the least we can do is demand a complete ceasefire...an end to the constant wounding and killing of the most vulnerable and innocent people in Gaza.

According to UNICEF, one child is killed or wounded in Gaza every 10 minutes. As there are no longer proper hospital facilities or medications, surgical removal of limbs must be done on these little ones without anesthesia....the same goes for their parents and grandparents, of course.

I have not witnessed any of this first hand, but I can share with you the report of a United Nations professional who has. This an observation made by UNICEF Communication Specialist Tess Ingram:

"I left Gaza yesterday after spending two weeks there. It was my second mission into Gaza this year.

"By far, what struck me most about this mission was the number of wounded children – not just in the hospitals, but on the streets. In their makeshift shelters. Going about their now permanently altered lives.

"Children are wearing a tremendous share of the scars of this war.

"The thousands of injured in Gaza struggle to receive the medical care they need...injured children often languish in pain" (<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-disproportionately-wearing-scars-war-gaza-geneva-palais-briefing-note>)

We who are witness to this terrible suffering and destruction need to, at the very least, call for a permanent ceasefire, and a negotiated peace that respects the lives of all human beings residing in Palestine and the occupied territories.

Thank you for your attention to this most important matter that is impacting the lives of our town's citizens, and the world community. Please support the Ceasefire Resolution. Mary Lynn Cramer, [17 Mill Street, Arlington, MA 02476](#)

April 23, 2024

Dear Select Board Members,

My name is Claudia Donnet, and I am writing in support of Arlington Select Board voting to support an immediate and permanent ceasefire resolution in Gaza.

I want to add my voice to request Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop funding military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As an Arlington resident for 12 years, I feel very strongly about the fact that I live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people while tens of thousands of civilians, including about 14,000 innocent children, have been murdered in Gaza since October.

Knowing that this would not have happened without the significant support from the United States government, and knowing that our billions of tax dollars continue to fund the guns and bombs used on innocent civilians, is something I cannot ignore, and nobody should ignore.

The violence in Gaza continues to be felt deeply here in Arlington. Many people of Palestinian descent live here and are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza, and they are in a constant state of distress about their loved ones who are still forced to live under the most inhumane and fatal conditions. Many residents with personal ties to Israel are also hurt and not approving their government's military action. I have no direct ties to neither but I see the images of the suffering of too many innocents. It has been too much damage already. This needs to stop.

Other Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and Brookline is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. The time is long overdue for the AHRC and the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

Sincerely,

Claudia Donnet

Arlington resident, precinct 9

Proclamation being considered on 4/24 meeting

altaf saadi <altafsaadi@gmail.com>

Wed 4/24/2024 12:19 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Select Board,

I am a resident of Arlington and am writing to express my support for the proclamation in support of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

One of the things that resonated with me in an [article](#) I read about the Medford ceasefire resolution was how local statements like these are a way to amplify public opinion and the voices of local residents who feel ignored at federal levels of the government. Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions. And support for a ceasefire is shared widely. The latest Gallup polls suggest that nearly [75%](#) of all US adults disapprove of what is happening in Israel currently. I am Muslim American, and I have been buoyed by statements from people of conscience from all backgrounds-- over [1000 Black Pastors](#), over [1000 Rabbis](#), [U.S. Churches](#) via the National Council of Churches, [church leadership worldwide](#), [the Pope](#) (who has reiterated his call [twice](#)), and so many more. This is because the current situation in Gaza has reached records we are all horrified by-- the largest cohort of [pediatric amputees](#) in history, [more children killed](#) in 4 months in Gaza than all over the world over four years, more healthcare workers and aid workers kidnapped and killed than all world's conflicts in previous years, a [larger carbon footprint and environmental impact](#) than more than 20 of the world's most climate-vulnerable nations in just the first 60 days of bombings -- and all these statistics have already become underestimates given that we are now 200 days in and counting, with violence continuing unabated. That billions of our tax dollars are used to fund the weapons used on innocent civilians make this all the more important for us to take an unequivocal stance for peace.

I also want to share an experience I had attending a rally calling for a ceasefire in downtown Boston, as one example of how I've been impacted and why this is personally important as an Arlington resident. Shortly after the rally had started, a woman in the crowd had a seizure, and, as a neurologist, I took care of her until the paramedics arrived. As the crowd had marched far away from us, I decided to come home. While I was waiting for my Lyft back to Arlington, two women noticed I was holding a sign that said "Healthcare Worker for Gaza," and they began to berate me. They first said: "Just go to Gaza" and "Why don't you leave America then and go to Gaza." I initially responded, "I would love to go there and help people who are dying." My first inclination as a healthcare worker is always to jump in to help, and this was before 400+ attacks on hospitals in Gaza making delivering healthcare there nearly impossible. But then one smirked and said and repeated: "yes, go over there and see what they will do to you. See what they will do to you." Her insinuation was clear: as a Muslim woman with a headscarf, I would be shot and killed.

This incident was steeped in the logic of collective guilt, which has unfortunately been used to justify the horrific current reality in Gaza and statistics I included in my email above. But there can be no justification for this degree of indiscriminate killing and violence, like newborn Palestinian babies being left by Israeli soldiers to [die and decompose](#) in their hospital beds with milk bottles and diapers next to them. It is absolutely within our power to say that people who look like me and children who look like my children do not deserve to die simply because they are guilty by association.

I hope you will support this proclamation as a message of hope and peace for residents of Arlington. I will end with the words of Michelle Alexander from this poignant [interview](#): "All of us have a conscience that whispers to us, sometimes in the dark. The mandates of conscience that arise within each of us arise not out of loyalty to abstract principles or doctrines, but from a place of deep knowing, a deep knowing that we owe something to each other as human beings, that we belong to each other, and that our freedom and liberation depends on one another."

Thank you for reading and in humanity,
Altat Saadi
(resident of Arlington)

Proposed Ceasefire Resolution - Gaza & West Bank

mary lynn <mllynn2@yahoo.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 10:40 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Select Board Members, ***please attach this to the agenda as public comments. Thank You.***

I, like many of you and my friends and acquaintances in Arlington have been horrified by the daily media reports of the killing of children, women, elderly, innocent sons, brothers, and husbands, entire families, in Gaza. This---what other countries and professionals, and political leaders have called "genocide"--- is happening far away from those of us living in Arlington; yet we all, as ethical, moral, compassionate human beings feel deeply moved and desperate to end the many months of ongoing daily destruction of homes, municipal buildings, schools, and hospitals, along with the killing of doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers, rescue workers, reporters, and civilians attempting to aid those wounded or buried under the rubble of bombed houses. Other towns and cities in Massachusetts and throughout the USA have felt that the least we can do is demand a complete ceasefire...an end to the constant wounding and killing of the most vulnerable and innocent people in Gaza.

According to UNICEF, one child is killed or wounded in Gaza every 10 minutes. As there are no longer proper hospital facilities or medications, surgical removal of limbs must be done on these little ones without anesthesia....the same goes for their parents and grandparents, of course.

I have not witnessed any of this first hand, but I can share with you the report of a United Nations professional who has. This an observation made by UNICEF Communication Specialist Tess Ingram:

"I left Gaza yesterday after spending two weeks there. It was my second mission into Gaza this year.

"By far, what struck me most about this mission was the number of wounded children – not just in the hospitals, but on the streets. In their makeshift shelters. Going about their now permanently altered lives.

"Children are wearing a tremendous share of the scars of this war.

"The thousands of injured in Gaza struggle to receive the medical care they need...injured children often languish in pain" (<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/children-disproportionately-wearing-scars-war-gaza-geneva-palais-briefing-note>)

We who are witness to this terrible suffering and destruction need to, at the very least, call for a permanent ceasefire, and a negotiated peace that respects the lives of all human beings residing in Palestine and the occupied territories.

Thank you for your attention to this most important matter that is impacting the lives of our town's citizens, and the world community. Please support the Ceasefire Resolution. Mary Lynn Cramer, 17 Mill Street, Arlington, MA 02476

Re: ceasefire support ADD TO AGENDA AS PUBLIC COMMENT

Sarah McKinnon <smckinnonarl@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 6:12 PM

To:SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Greetings,

I'm sure everyone involved in this debate as well as every attendee of Wednesday's meeting has learned about famous historic atrocities and wondered, "how did this happen? Why did no one stop it? How is it that we didn't see or fully grasp what was happening until it was too late?" How did the Nazis ever rise to power in Germany? How was the Rwandan genocide ever allowed to happen? Or the Armenian genocide? How did we allow the slavery of Africans to continue, not just in this country but in several others, for centuries? Where were the good people? Where were the decent people? Why did anyone stand by and let this happen? And we all love to tell ourselves that we, of course, would have been on the correct side of these things.

Hindsight makes everything clear. And understanding history helps us prevent it from happening again. The problem, though, is that history doesn't repeat itself, as Mark Twain said, but it often rhymes. We're never faced with the exact same problem twice. It's a challenge to recognize the present and to appreciate the historical significance of current events and how we will be viewed by future generations. We are part of history.

I have heard people argue that Arlington passing a ceasefire resolution will not do anything or have any impact. Bullshit. I don't think anybody is under any delusion that Arlington's ceasefire resolution will, in and of itself, have a direct or noticeable impact. But that's not how things work. Fortunately, we are part of a larger whole. Multiple cities and municipalities across the country have passed ceasefire resolutions. By its very nature, that number is only going to continue to get larger. I would hate to think that our egos only permit us to do good when we can see a tangible outcome. I hope, rather, that our humility and our humanity demand that we follow the example of cities like our neighbors Medford, Somerville, Melrose, and in doing so, set our own example for other MA towns and towns across the country. History is easy to unpack and understand. The present is the real challenge. And we have to face the present and help mold it into a history that future generations can be proud of. Ceasefire now. Please attach this letter to the agenda as a public comment.

Thank You,

Dan Goguen
125 Pleasant St. #305

support for Israel/Palestine peace

Maggie Carey <margaret.carey13@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 6:02 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I wholeheartedly support sustained peace or at the very least a ceasefire in the Middle East. The hostages must also be returned immediately. It is unconscionable that such violence continues and that this country is sustaining the violence -- we all must speak out against this atrocity.

Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

Margaret Carey
58 Kensington Park
Arlington, MA 02476

"Racism is so universal in the country, so widespread and deep-seated, that it is invisible because it is so normal" Shirley Chisholm, 1970

Support for the Arlington Ceasefire Resolution

Sue Katz <sue.katz@yahoo.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 2:32 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>; SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To the Arlington Select Board:

As an Arlington resident who previously lived in Israel for 14 years, I speak out of intimate knowledge of the situation in Israel/Palestine. I have resided for many years in Arlington because of its culture of dignity, equity, and justice - and I would wish the same for Palestinians.

Therefore, I ask for your open consideration of the proclamation for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, for the release of all hostages, and for saving lives during these dark and violent times. Friends who live in other places around Boston envy the spirit Arlingtonians have shown, with our persistent twice-weekly StandOuts to call for a complete and lasting ceasefire. I hope that the Select Board will support the adoption this humane resolution.

May I further request that you attach this to the agenda as public comments.

I look forward to the Select Board decision,

Sue Katz

ARTICLE RESOLUTION FOR A CEASEFIRE PROCLAMATION

C A White <cawhitema@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 1:29 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Stephen W. DeCoursey, Lenard Diggins, Eric D. Helmuth, John V. Hurd, and Diane M. Mahon,

My name is **Carolyn A White**, Town of Arlington Finance Committee member since 2012. I am writing to request that the AHRC propose and vote on a proclamation calling for an immediate **and permanent** ceasefire in Gaza.

On top of these appeals to AHRC, in a larger sense we are calling for Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand an immediate **and permanent** ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid. Work to reinstate UNWRA **or an equivalent organization in scope, depth, and capability**
3. Stop funding **offensive** military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As an Arlington resident **since birth (minus 1987 – 2007)**, I feel very strongly about the fact that I live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. As someone who works in **healthcare and academia**, it disgusts and infuriates me to know that over twice the equivalent of our student population - at least **13,000 innocent children** - have been murdered in Gaza since October.

It is our responsibility as people of conscience to demand an end to the relentless violence that has been destroying all life in Gaza. At this moment, more than **32,000 Palestinians** have been murdered by the Israeli Forces since October. Knowing that this would not have happened without the unwavering support from the United States government, and knowing that our **billions of tax dollars** continue to fund the guns and bombs used on innocent civilians, is beyond sickening for anyone who has been paying attention.

The violence in Gaza continues to be felt deeply here in Arlington. Many people of Palestinian descent are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza, and they are in a constant state of distress about their loved ones who are still forced to live under the most inhumane and fatal conditions. This suffering should have been ended long ago, but the next best time to act is now.

Other Massachusetts towns such as **Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton**, and **Amherst** have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and **Brookline** is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations **passed one as well**. The time is long overdue for the AHRC and the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

****please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Thank you.

Carolyn A White, PT, MBA

Town of Arlington, Finance Committee Member since 2012

Arlington Ceasefire Resolution

anju joglekar <joglekar.anju831@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 12:28 PM

To:Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>;Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>;Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>;John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>;Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>;SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear members of the Arlington Select Board,

I have lived in East Arlington for over 25 years. I write not only as a long time resident but also as a deeply concerned citizen of the planet.

Thinking globally, we know we are in a climate crisis and as we try to tackle the urgency of that crisis, I am moved to raise my voice locally for peace and against the conflict in Israel and Palestine. The devastation in Gaza caused by relentless bombing and bulldozing is causing a humanitarian crisis that I am not willing to ignore. Every day, innocent people are dying in hundreds, while their cultural, educational and healthcare institutions are turned to rubble. I write because it is wrong to pretend that life can go on as "usual" in Arlington.

I am compelled to make direct connections between the crisis in Gaza and the Town of Arlington.

One clear connection is the climate crisis that humanity needs to address together. It is clearer than ever that the world is experiencing extreme weather more frequently and with more intensity. It is also clear that it is experiencing devastating conflicts. In general, production and maintenance of weapons is heavily dependent on fossil fuels and contributes significantly to greenhouse gas emissions. Active conflicts, like the one in Gaza, contribute even more to those emissions. We need this conflict like we need a hole in our head.

Another important connection is that Jewish and Muslim residents of Arlington are experiencing hate on a daily basis. I strongly empathize with the deep emotional conviction that Jewish people all over the world have, (whether living in Israel or not), for a safe, secure place that the state of Israel is meant to be. At the same time, as someone who grew up in a colonized South Asian country, I also believe that Israel needs to coexist by truly acknowledging the right of Palestinians to self-determination, land, freedom and a life of dignity.

As I join other like-minded residents of Arlington in weekly, peaceful stand-outs in the center of Arlington, I am concerned about the safety of all Arlington residents caught up in this conflict, which has touched a lot of us in deeply significant ways.

Peace is not possible without justice. so let's agree to work on a livable planet for all with justice and peace. Let's call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and Israel, and for a political and diplomatic solution to this conflict.

I would very much appreciate it if you attach this email to the agenda as part of public comments.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gitanjali (Anju) Joglekar

21 Winter Street

The climate clock is ticking. The science is clear - we are in a climate crisis. We must act now to bring down greenhouse gas emissions and build a 100% renewable future.

In support of the Article Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation

Michelle Lewis <michellelewis87@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 12:13 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello Select Board members,

My name is Michelle Lewis and I'm writing to voice my support for the Article Resolution for a Ceasefire Proclamation. I will share some of my thoughts I sent to the Arlington Human Rights Commission below, please attach this to the agenda as public comments:

As a human being, watching the destruction of other human beings is absolutely distressing. I would like to see the community support efforts to call for the end to this brutality, and the end to selling war supplies and sending money to fund war crimes. As American citizens, we have a right to take action and communicate to our state and federal governments through local actions like a ceasefire proclamation. I want my child to grow up in a town that values the lives of everyone equally. I want to be able to tell my child that our town took a stand for the humanity of our neighbors, both in Arlington and across the world in Palestine.

For these reasons, I hope you will agree to make a proclamation for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, the release of all hostages, and the end of US funding/support for Israel until the proper investigations by the UN regarding war crimes and humanitarian law are completed.

Thank you,
Michelle Lewis,
Arlington resident, Precinct 14

Letter of Support for Ceasefire Resolution

Emily Quigley <emily.s.quigley@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 11:10 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Select Board Members,

My name is Emily Quigley, and I am writing in support of the ceasefire resolution being reviewed by the Arlington Select Board committee.

As a proud Jewish resident of Arlington, I am appalled and heartbroken that the town I live in has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. My family holds generational trauma from years of living in diaspora, and I have found myself here in Arlington - an educator, a friend, and member of the community. It is within this community that I organize for peace and justice alongside my neighbors of all races and religions. My safety as a Jewish person is tied up in the safety of all oppressed peoples, and is not bolstered by ongoing violence and genocidal acts of terror in Gaza.

Knowing that our government is the one supplying weapons, machinery, and funding of this genocide, I find it imperative to act on the governmental levels at which I have agency. Other Massachusetts towns such as Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, Northampton, and Amherst have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and Brookline is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations passed one as well. It is long overdue for the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate, permanent ceasefire, and an end to military aid to Israel.

The best time to act was months ago, but the next best time to act is now. I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Thanks,
Emily Quigley
28 Magnolia St
Arlington, MA 02474
856-285-4777

Ceasefire Resolution

B. Gibson <brendanpaulgibson@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 10:05 AM

To: Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>; Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Select Board Members Mahon, DeCoursey, Diggins, Helmuth, and Hurd,

My name is Brendan Gibson. I am a committed educator and voter who lives here in Arlington with my wife and three children. I am writing to request that the Select Board vote in favor of the resolution calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, as well as the release of all remaining Israeli hostages.

As the fourth generation of my family to reside here in town, I admittedly feel very strongly that this town's government has not yet taken sufficient steps to address the ongoing and relentless violence that is disproportionately affecting the Palestinian people.

Though this conflict is taking place thousands of miles away on a separate continent, it has local ramifications. Taxes paid by Arlington residents are subsidizing the suffering of innocent civilians. Incidents of Islamophobia and antisemitism are on the rise. Student protests have consumed nearby colleges, including my alma mater Tufts University. Several of Arlington's neighboring communities - including Cambridge, Medford, and Somerville - have already passed ceasefire resolutions.

The time is overdue for the Arlington Select Board to publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, as well as the release of all hostages. I urge you to do what is within your power and vote to minimize human suffering. Let's be on the right side of history.

Thank you for your time and consideration, and please attach this to the agenda as public comment.

Sincerely,
Brendan Gibson
63 Palmer Street

Call for Cease fire in Gaza

Farha Hasan <fzhasan@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 9:40 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Arlington Select Board,

My name is Farha Hasan, and I am writing to request that the AHRC propose and vote on a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. I also propose that when this proclamation is passed by the AHRC, it be sent to the Arlington Select Board for a vote.

As an Arlington resident and a parent raising a child in Arlington, I strongly feel that the town I live in should address the on going Genocide in Gaza. It is our responsibility to set an example for our children. To let them know that Arlington is a town that stands with peace and with humanity and values the lives of all human beings regardless of their religion, color, or political beliefs. According to the [United Nations](#), the six months war on Gaza, has resulted in over 10,000 women being killed, leaving 19,000 children orphaned

Other Massachusetts towns such as [Somerville](#), [Cambridge](#), [Medford](#), [Melrose](#), [Northampton](#), and [Amherst](#) have already passed ceasefire resolutions. AHRC and the town of Arlington must join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

****please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Kind regards,
Farha Hasan

Ceasefire Resolution

Lynette Culverhouse <lculverhouse@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 9:37 AM

To:Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc:SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

I am becoming increasingly concerned about our country's perpetuation of forever wars but the war in Israel and Gaza is more than war, it is the genocide of a race of people. As taxpayers we are supporting the murder and terror rained on women and children while our own people at home can't afford to pay rent. This is insanity and it has to stop. At least we in Arlington can show our opposition to this obsession with war and violence by calling for a ceasefire. But, as important is the trauma imposed on our own residents. I know people in Arlington who are traumatized by what is happening, people who identify as Jewish and Palestinian. We need to show support and compassion to our own residents who are so deeply affected by the ongoing destruction and violence.

Please support this resolution. It is the common sense and compassionate way for us, as one small community, to say no to further terrorism.

Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

Thank you.

Lynette Culverhouse

TMM precinct 11

Ceasefire Resolution - Please attach to public comments

Lace Ronald <lance.m.ronald@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 9:34 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

To whom it may concern,

I'm reaching out as a resident and community member of Arlington, Massachusetts. Since October I have witnessed horrific violence through social media and the news of the persons dying in Palestine. I am extremely worried and filled with grief at the lives lost. I'm frustrated that my national government has contributed to these horrors and allowed weapons production which result in the death of people and further invite catastrophic climate disasters to our planet.

I need the town where I live to vote for peace and do everything we can to stop the violence. Our modern world has so much food and resources. We should be working to share everything we can and prevent entire cities and countries from starvation and death.

Please attach this to public comments and consider the moral obligation we all have to speaking for peace.

Thank you for reading these words and looking beyond any feelings of vengeance to see that furthering violence only prolongs harm. I hope every day that someone can save the people of Gaza. May we take a step in that direction.

In gratitude,
Lace Ronald

Ceasefire resolution

Brian Mariano <bmm0623@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 8:38 AM

To: Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hi,

My name is Brian Mariano and over the last 6 months, the news and images coming from Gaza have been deeply impactful as a member of the Arlington community and I want to use my voice to advocate for the humanity of Palestinians. I strongly support the passing of a ceasefire resolution.

While I can admit that before October, I was nowhere near informed enough on the historical context in Palestine and Israel, and certainly still require more education. I was also nowhere near informed enough on my own ignorance to how the US has facilitated the oppression of the Palestinian people for decades. What I do feel confident in is our community's ability to hold empathy for those impacted by the October attacks, as well as the Palestinians who have borne the brunt of unjust violence in retaliation. And to do so we cannot let our government off the hook in their complicity to the killing of 32,000 civilians, the murdering of children, the starvation of 1.7 million displaced humans and the targeting of aid workers and journalists and denial of humanitarian aid to the region. It is important to me to stand up and speak out against the cycles of violence that our government perpetuates over and over again, with our dollars and without our consent.

I humbly ask my community to join our neighbors in Somerville, Cambridge and Medford in the passing of this resolution, and stand up for the future we believe in that ensures our own safety as well as those around the world. Please nurture the roots of Arlington's history and continue to criticize and dissent the oppressive actions of our government. Pass this ceasefire resolution. Thank you for reading, please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Brian Mariano

Article 5 - Arlington Ceasefire Resolution

Hina Jolin <hina.alam@gmail.com>

Tue 4/23/2024 1:07 AM

To:Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>;Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>;Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>;John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>;Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc:SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Members of the Arlington Select Board -

please attach this to the agenda as public comment

My name is Hina Jolin, I am a long-time Muslim resident of Arlington, a town I chose to raise my family because of its progressive, diverse, and inclusive nature. I am writing to you today to implore the Select Board to adopt a proclamation in favor of an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine, the release of all hostages, including those held illegally in Israeli prisons, the immediate provision of lifesaving humanitarian aid to Palestinians, and a diplomatic resolution for Palestinians and Israelis.

Arlington has a growing Muslim community, with a highly diverse and educated group of residents. We have participated and contributed to the cultural and economic strength of this town; yet we are regularly overlooked, or worse, subjected to acts of hate. Any criticism of Israel's actions or even calls for a ceasefire are being met with baseless accusations of antisemitism. Our students are being harassed and discriminated against at all levels and the Muslim workforce is being silenced for voicing our fears. Support from our elected officials has never been more essential. So, I ask you why has the Select Board and the Town of Arlington remained silent on the matters of human life as we watch an active genocide unfold before our eyes? I am asking you to reflect on the immense power you have to change course at this very moment. You have the extraordinary privilege to influence cities and towns across the Commonwealth and lead by example.

We all witnessed the horror of October 7th, and it is right to condemn that violence. However, in this moment, 7 months later, silence equates to unconditional support for Israel's disproportionate and indiscriminate response by elected officials across the US political spectrum, which has resulted in our nation's tacit responsibility for the genocide happen right now. I truly believe the deafening silence by our elected officials and the dehumanization of the Muslim world has allowed Israel to attack Palestinian land with impunity.

In addition to appeals to the Select Board for a vote in favor for this proclamation, the residents of this town and across the Commonwealth have called upon Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand for an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop the funding of military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

Personally, I am ashamed to live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people, which truly is the bare minimum at this point in our history. I am filled with so much anger when I wake up every morning to an increasing number of murders. I am enraged that more people have not acknowledged or are unwilling to acknowledge, the brutal slayings by the Israeli Occupying Forces of over 33,000 Palestinians, 13,000 of which are children, not to mention the thousands that remain missing under the rubble and the hundreds of thousands who have been slaughtered over the last 75 years. This death toll will continue to rise at an alarming rate as countless others are forcibly starved and denied essential humanitarian aid.

It is our responsibility as people of conscience to demand an end to the relentless violence that has been erasing an entire people for decades. Knowing that this genocide would not have been possible without the unwavering support from the United States government and knowing that our own tax dollars continue to fund the weapons used against innocent civilians, is not only a difficult reality to live with but an incredibly shameful one to bare for anyone who has been paying attention.

The violence in Gaza has been felt deeply and viscerally in Arlington. People of Palestinian descent are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza on a daily basis. They live in a constant state of distress about the future of those who remain, forced to live under an inhumane occupation. However, one does not need to be of Palestinian descent to bear witness to, yet another US backed slaughter against humanity.

I urge you to read through every message about this proclamation and listen to every testimony from the residents of this town. And I urge you to do what many cities and towns across the Commonwealth, including Somerville, Cambridge, Medford, Melrose, East Hampton, Greenfield, Northampton, and Amherst have already done, and pass this ceasefire resolution.

The time is long overdue for the Town of Arlington to join in this public declaration for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

In Solidarity,

Hina Jolin

Permanent and immediate ceasefire in Gaza

Nathan Nesbitt <nathan.nesbitt@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 2:01 PM

Cc: Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>; SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Arlington Select Board,

My name is Nathan Nesbitt. I grew up in central Massachusetts, lived in Medford and Cambridge during my PhD at Boston College and I now live in Arlington with my wife and toddler while working in Somerville on green tech to address climate change.

I ask that the board vote on a proclamation/statement calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

I have been deeply saddened to read reports of ongoing killing and starvation in Gaza, which follow explicit statements from Israel's highest elected and appointed leaders of their intention to prioritize damage and to block food, water, electricity, and fuel.

I have been frustrated that family members and my workplace have discouraged conversation on the topic.

Silence enables the status quo.

I have lost trust in my federal government to follow its own laws that protect civilian lives.

This makes me worry for the lives of myself and my family members (some of which are muslim and not white). This is because the US federal government has used tax dollars from me and Arlington to send offensive weapons to Israel, often without congressional approval, and in obvious defiance of our own humanitarian laws. Specifically, after the Biden administration had for months repeatedly criticized Israel for blocking humanitarian aid to Gaza, it then certified that Israel does not block aid, allowing additional bombs to be shipped to Israel in recent weeks.

Similarly, our federal government has repeatedly complained of too high civilian killings in Gaza, but then said South Africa's case at the ICJ accusing Israel of genocide was baseless. It has blocked UN action on ending genocide. This creates dangerous precedents of putting politics above human lives.

This status quo of one-sided ongoing large scale killing and starving in Gaza in a one-sided non-proportional genocide I find very troubling, particularly with US funding and arming of one side, Israel. Israel cannot use ongoing famine, with hundreds dying daily from starvation, as a bargaining chip in negotiations for hostage release.

The onesidedness of the conflict is why any statement from AHRC must center the plight of Gazans experiencing genocide, not legitimize Israel's position by saying both sides are at fault.

Our federal government has failed us in following its own human rights laws. **Thus, the town of Arlington has an obligation to speak up for human rights.** This is why statements on such international politics are within the purview of the AHRC and Select Board, consistent with their historic precedent of making past statements.

As an impacted member of the community, other community members would make me feel more welcome, safe and valued in Arlington by standing against silence. By speaking out against the status quo of famine in Gaza and illegal arms shipments from the USA.

The town of Arlington itself can take action to make me feel more welcome, safe and valued in Arlington by making a statement calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I thank the board for their time.

Kind regards,
Nathan

--

Nathan T. Nesbitt
nathan.nesbitt@gmail.com
[he/his]

Call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and genocide tax resistance

Naila <nail0207@yahoo.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 1:35 PM

To: Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Arlington Select Board,

My name is Naila Al Hasan. I am writing to you to ask that you vote for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and the West Bank. Please attach my letter to the agenda as public comments.

After 7 months of ethnic cleansing that has killed over 41,000 Palestinians and the near-complete destruction of Gaza, a permanent ceasefire resolution is not only the bare minimum, it is time to end US financial and moral complicity, and sanction Israel for war crimes. As such, my family are additionally choosing to engage in Genocide Tax Resistance this tax season as I explain below.

My family moved to Arlington about six months ago primarily because of its family friendly focus. I am a stay-at-home parent to a toddler as well as 6.5 months pregnant.

In fact, I've been pregnant almost exactly the same number of days as the Israeli aggression, now officially a genocide, on the Palestinian people. The horrifying footage coming out of Gaza is distressing and traumatizing to bear witness to. We cannot continue to stand by and whitewash the suffering of the Palestinian people. A permanent ceasefire is critical to saving precious human lives. As world citizens and taxpayers whose taxes are unjustly funding the Israeli genocide of the Palestinian people, it is our responsibility and moral duty to do the right thing by enabling an end to this carnage.

Earlier this month, on April 5th, 2024, day 182, it was Palestinian Children's Day. Here are some stats that marked the occasion:

- 1) Israel has killed 14,000+ children in Gaza and 117 in the West Bank since Oct. 7th. 31 of the Gazan children were killed by starvation while 50,000+ are actively malnourished
- 2) 200 children are held captive by Israel
- 3) 17,000+ are unaccompanied or separated by immediate family
- 4) More than 10 children on average have lost one or both of their legs every day in Gaza since October 7, with many amputations performed without anesthesia [1]
- 5) 'Wounded child, no surviving family' is an official term for injured children with no parents to care for them [2]
- 6) As of Dec. 4th, 2023, nearly 25,000 Palestinian children in Gaza have become orphans [3]

These are just SOME of the horrific stats reported by reputable agencies.

One video that has stuck with me is of 5 year young Faisal recounting the moment his mother was executed in front of him in cold blood.

"They shot her in her stomach. She was pregnant"

In what world is this acceptable???

Bearing witness to a new level of horror every day of the past 198 days has left me in a continuous state of dysregulation and trauma, I already worry I am passing on significant trauma to the child I am carrying.

As a nation, we have funded Israel with \$3.8 billion USD, no-strings-attached every year since 2017. Massachusetts and Arlington have sent \$129,975,320 and \$706,408, respectively, taxpayer monies for weapons [4].

In Arlington, this aid could instead be used for:

- 83 households with public housing for a year
- 245 children receiving free or low-cost healthcare
- 7 elementary school teachers
- 2,011 households with solar electricity produced for a year
- 18 students with their loan debt canceled

For many years, I've lobbied US representatives, without success, to condition this aid as Israel has used this funding to implicate, detain, and imprison children. House bills were introduced by Congresswoman Betty McCollum that never saw a companion bill in the senate [5].

In light of these facts, my family is choosing this year to divest our taxes from the state of Massachusetts as well as our home town of Arlington so long as they continue to invest taxpayer monies, and therefore, make us personally complicit in the Israeli genocide of Palestinians.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

- [1] <https://www.cnn.com/2024/01/08/middleeast/gaza-children-losing-legs-disease-intl-hnk/index.html>
- [2] ['Wounded child, no surviving family': The pain of Gaza's orphans](#)
- [3] [Report: Nearly 25,000 children in Gaza now orphans](#)
- [4] [Home - US Campaign for Palestinian Rights](#)
- [5] <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/5/5/us-congresswoman-introduces-bill-to-restrict-aid-to-israel>

Many thanks,

Naila Al Hasan, Ph.D.

Arlington, MA

Immediate and Permanent Ceasefire Resolution in Gaza

Carissa Englert <cenglert23@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 1:28 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: arlingtonforpalestine@gmail.com <arlingtonforpalestine@gmail.com>; SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

My name is Carissa Englert, and I am writing to request that the AHRC propose and vote on a proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. I also propose that when this proclamation is passed by the AHRC, it be sent to the Arlington Select Board for a vote.

On top of these appeals to AHRC, in a larger sense we are calling for Congress and the Biden Administration to:

1. Demand an immediate and permanent ceasefire
2. Rush humanitarian aid and work to reinstate UNWRA
3. Stop funding military aid to Israel
4. Hold the Israeli government accountable to international law

As an new Arlington resident, I feel very strongly about the fact that I live in a town which has not yet taken the steps to address the ongoing genocide of the Palestinian people. As someone who works in education, it disgusts and infuriates me to know that over twice the equivalent of our student population - at least [13,000 innocent children](#) - have been murdered in Gaza since October.

It is our responsibility as people of conscience to demand an end to the relentless violence that has been destroying all life in Gaza. At this moment, more than [32,000 Palestinians](#) have been murdered by the Israeli Forces since October. Knowing that this would not have happened without the unwavering support from the United States government, and knowing that our [billions of tax dollars](#) continue to fund the guns and bombs used on innocent civilians, is beyond sickening for anyone who has been paying attention.

The violence in Gaza continues to be felt deeply here in Arlington. Many people of Palestinian descent are mourning the loss of their loved ones in Gaza, and they are in a constant state of distress about their loved ones who are still forced to live under the most inhumane and fatal conditions. This suffering should have been ended long ago, but the next best time to act is now.

Other Massachusetts towns such as [Somerville](#), [Cambridge](#), [Medford](#), [Melrose](#), [Northampton](#), and [Amherst](#) have already passed ceasefire resolutions, and [Brookline](#) is pending approval. As of March 26th, the United Nations [passed one as well](#). The time is long overdue for the AHRC and the town of Arlington to join other people of conscience and publicly call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire.

I urge you to do what is right and within your power.

****please attach this to the agenda as public comments****

Carissa Englert (she/her)
402-560-7227
cenglert23@gmail.com

RE: Select Board Meeting Wednesday April 27 @ 7pm CEASEFIRE RESOLUTION

Susan M <susanmmortimer@hotmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 12:14 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Please Include This Letter As Part of the Agenda

To the Town of Arlington Select Board regarding its April 24 Meeting:

I write today to urge you to support the Ceasefire Resolution as it is now proposed and written.

I am a 20-year resident of Arlington, and a 70-year inhabitant of Massachusetts, the United States, and the World. I actively work to affect a more just community locally and globally. As a U. S. citizen, aware of the disproportionate power our government exerts, I recognize the responsibility to speak out when that power is exercised to inflict massive suffering upon the most oppressed peoples [typically brown and Black]- and when it, as routine policy, funds and arms occupation/colonial forces [typically white] and carries out cruel sanctions against 3 billion human beings.

I am horrified that those in power continue to fund the annihilation of a people who are forced to live as refugees in their homeland. I am ashamed that my tax dollars contribute to it.

"If you are 'neutral' in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor." Desmond Tutu

I urge you to support the proposed ceasefire resolution, as is, and to remember that what is happening now in Occupied Palestine did not begin on October 7, 2023, as those who frame the narrative want you to believe.

Please attach this letter to the agenda as a public comment.

Thank you, *Susan Mortimer*



Virus-free. www.avast.com

Support for Arlington Ceasefire Resolution

Sophie Spink <sophie.spink11@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 11:56 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

please attach this to the agenda as public comments

Good morning Select Board,

My name is Sophie Spink. I am a 23 year old resident of Arlington who is deeply concerned about the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. I have lived in Arlington since I was 5 years old, and went through APS, starting at Brackett, then Ottoson, and finally the High School. I played in Arlington Soccer Club until 8th grade, rowed for Arlington Belmont Crew all of High School, and started the high school's chapter of Amnesty International. I have been involved with the town's Diversity Task Group. All of this to say, Arlington is where I grew up, and Arlington is where my heart is.

Today, I am writing to urge the Arlington Select Board to vote yes on the ceasefire warrant article that is before you.

As of the date of this letter, more than [33,000 Palestinians have been killed](#) and [more than three quarters](#) of the 2.2 million people in Gaza have been displaced due to ongoing military campaigns by Israel. The suffering of the Gazan people is incalculable, and is in direct violation of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

As a young adult who grew up in the town of Arlington, and have chosen to stay in Arlington, I strongly believe in our town to do the right thing. Not only are our tax dollars contributing toward the weapons used against Palestinians, but there are residents of Arlington whose family and loved ones are directly impacted by this violence. It is important to me as a lifelong resident of Arlington that Arlington stands on the side of humanity and passes a ceasefire resolution.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I cannot stress how deeply I feel about this issue. I hope that you can consider this with an open heart, with compassion for every person suffering in Gaza and Israel, and with compassion and love for those in Arlington who have family involved in the conflict.

Sincerely,

Sophie

--

Sophie Spink
she/her

Public Comment on Ceasefire Resolution

Emily Mo <emilymo008@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 11:40 AM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Please attach this letter to the agenda as public comments.

Dear Select Board,

My name is Emily Mo and I am writing in support of a permanent bilateral ceasefire resolution.

I want to start by validating the reports of increased local antisemitism and Islamophobia that have risen since October. Some of these incidents I have witnessed first-hand. As someone who supports a ceasefire, I can say that all of the neighbors I've met who also support a ceasefire are doing so out of a love for humanity and an intolerance for human suffering. I know that our Arlington community has exercised their power to organize against hate crimes in the past, and I have hope that we can continue to do so in the future.

But we can't divorce the problem in our communities from what's happening in the Middle East. The tensions brewing in our communities are directly tied to sentiments around what lives are expendable in Israel and Gaza. Our tax dollars are flowing directly to weapons that contribute to the slaughter. We can't have a productive community conversation on this topic without taking a strong stance that we need to try to end the violence for EVERYONE—otherwise we would inherently be leaving some people out of the conversation. The notion that one group of people has to keep dying in order to keep another group safe is inherently dangerous, and we must reject this thinking. The issue of Israel depriving Palestinian civilians of basic necessities is not "too complicated" for Arlington to talk about.

Committing to a ceasefire resolution will send a message to our leaders that we can (and should) do better as a country and as humans. **We are better than the notion that mass annihilation and starvation can ever be productive towards the goal of peace.** I want to live in an Arlington that simultaneously takes war crimes seriously AND works to build long-term understanding, friendship, and safety among its residents.

Thank you,

Emily Mo
42 Allen St

Fwd: Please Pass Article 5Kaspar Kasparian <kkasparian9b@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 10:15 AM

To: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Kaspar Kasparian** <kkasparian9b@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, Apr 22, 2024 at 10:04 AM

Subject: Please Pass Article 5

To: <sbadmin@town.ar>**Please Pass Article 5**

Dear Arlington SB Members,

First of all, I find it wrong to conflate support for Palestinian rights with hostility to Jewish people by accusing anyone or group of people of antisemitism. Unfortunately, this is what's happening now and has been happening for decades. This injustice is happening most often now against students and faculty at US university as well other US citizens for voicing and protesting Israel's abuses of Palestinians, especially now with its genocidal war in Gaza. As a result doxxing and threatening students and faculty or expelling students and stripping student organizations from their right to exist frequently occurs when anyone speaks up for Palestinian human rights, against Israel's apartheid policies, and against Israel's genocidal military actions in Gaza. These harsh actions taken against those protesting is a kind of authoritarian oppression used to quash free speech about Israel's human abuses of Palestinians. It is unjust to conflate support for Palestinian rights with hatred and hostility toward Jewish people. And it's the responsibility of government leaders to see this as wrong and voice against this threat.

Second of all, Netanyahu has made it clear that he intends to disregard the safety of the hostages held, wipe out Palestinian life in Gaza, provoke further war by killing people in the the Iranian Consulate in Syria and incite a further war in the Middle East. Our US government gives Israel \$3.8 billion every year taken from our taxes. Now they want to give Israel \$17.6 billion in military assistance while its genocidal war is going on.

If we don't choose a strong ceasefire resolution, then we are party to perpetuating this bloody inhumanity. As citizens in a democracy, it is wrong to excuse ourselves from establishing a town resolution calling for the the end of the conflict that risks greater greater human deaths and injuries in the Middle East, in our country, and in countries around the world, and puts Jewish and Arabic citizens at risk here in Arlington and elsewhere else.

No town or city in the US is an Island separate from its nations democratic responsibility. We need to become the beacon in the world that we claim to be. Please do what's responsible and right. Pass Article 5.

Sincerely,

Kaspar Kasparian

Democratic Humanist

Ceasefire resolution

Layla Khayr <layla.khayr@gmail.com>

Mon 4/22/2024 9:14 AM

To:Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>;Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>;Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>;John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>;Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc:SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Hello,

Please attach this to the agenda as public comments:

My name is Layla Khayr- I'm an Arlington resident, Arab American, a visible headscarf wearing Muslim woman, a social worker, an educator, and a community member.

I ask that you vote in favor of a ceasefire resolution.

Calling for a ceasefire is the most important first step to stopping the relentless massacres in Palestine, and Gaza specifically. Because this genocide is funded by the US - our tax dollars payoff weapons and bombs- it's our responsibility to take a stand.

In Arlington, it is estimated that over 700,000 dollars of taxpayer money has gone to Israel's weapons. As a social worker, I am painfully aware of the ways in which historically oppressed communities are in need of resources- resources that could be funded with these same tax dollars.

The ongoing genocide in Gaza is racist, settler colonialist, and orientalist.

These ideologies have implications abroad and here in Arlington. These are racist ideologies, rooted in white supremacy. This is Anti- Arab and Anti- Muslim racism. Knowing that folks in this community are in agreement with what Israel is doing, adds salt to the wound as we watch in real time the slaughtering and starving of our kin.

These events 100% have repercussions here in the US and in Arlington - especially for Palestinians, Arabs, Muslims, anyone perceived to hold any or all of these identities, as well as our Jewish community members- many who also support a need for a ceasefire.

I grew up in the wake of 9/11, I have spent my entire life having to prove that we (Arabs, Muslims, anyone who looks like us) don't stand for terrorism and my hope was always that young people today, including my own child, won't need to keep doing this. On top of the sadness, pain, and horror we are feeling as we watch the people of Gaza be massacred and starved to death as we speak, we're also expected to denounce terrorism AND be extra vigilant to protect our safety, the safety of our children, parents, and community members.

A ceasefire resolution sends a message to me, my family, and other impacted community members that the people of Gaza are human, that Arabs and Muslims are human, and that we deserve to be seen as such.

Thank you,

Layla Khayr

My name is Thomas Lemere and I have lived in Arlington for the past 15 years. I am asking that the town of Arlington produce a document, in the towns name, calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza, and that the document be passed by the Select Board at the earliest possible date.

I am not going to debate the merits of one side or the other concerning the ongoing conflict between Israel and the Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank. Rather, I am here to lend my voice to the call to recognize and respect the common humanity of all people.

Human Rights are universal! If it were Israelis dying by the 10's of thousands I would be here asking for a ceasefire on their behalf. I was horrified and sickened by the events of October 7th. I am horrified and sickened by what has transpired since.

“They have denied us our humanity... why should we respect theirs?” Which side in this conflict has the exclusive rights to this statement?

Earlier communications from the Arlington Human Rights Commission seeking input from local residents concerning the petition calling for a ceasefire made reference to those “impacted members of the community”. My first impression was that I was being *excluded* rather than *included* by that wording as I am neither Jewish, Israeli, Muslim, nor Palestinian. I assure the Select Board however, that as a thinking and feeling human-being, and member of the community, that I have been profoundly “impacted” by the events of the past six months.

I respectfully ask that the Board pass the statement and that they attach this request to the agenda as part of the public comment.

Thank you,
Tom Lemere

Gaza Ceasefire

cheryldressler@gmail.com <cheryldressler@gmail.com>

Sun 4/21/2024 5:45 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; DMahon@town.arlington.ma.us. <DMahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBadmin <SBadmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Arlington Select Board,

I am writing to request that you vote for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. In so doing, Arlington will join other concerned communities across Massachusetts that have demonstrated clarity about the nature of the conflict in Gaza, namely that a genocide is unfolding that has already taken the lives of tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children, and that 2 million additional lives are at risk if the US (taxpayer) funded, indiscriminate bombing campaign and the Israeli ground assault continue. The entire world has witnessed the livestreaming of the destruction of a people, their homes, their schools, their cultural centers—let's join the voices of so many in our own country (including a large number of Jews through organizations such as Jewish Voice for Peace and If Not Now) who are demanding an end to this insanity.

Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

Sincerely,
Cheryl Dressler

Ceasefire resolution

Jordan Weinstein <jordan3weinstein@gmail.com>

Sun 4/21/2024 4:55 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

please attach this to the agenda as a public comment

Dear Select Board Members,

I urge you to support Warrant Article 5 at the Special Town Meeting which calls for a **permanent ceasefire** of the Hamas-Israeli conflict. As an American Jew I have a personal interest in seeing a ceasefire agreement: The flames of Antisemitism and Islamophobia in the US are both being fanned by this conflict, jeopardizing the safety of both groups around the world. As a result, It's in all our interests to end this conflict.

As a Jew myself, I do not believe that calling for a ceasefire is in any way antisemitic.

Sincerely,
Jordan Weinstein
TMM pct 21

Arlington Ceasefire Resolution

Thea Paneth <tpaneth@gmail.com>

Sun 4/21/2024 3:02 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Arlington Select Board,

I write in regard to the Ceasefire Resolution that concerned residents of Arlington have brought before the Board. As a long time Arlington resident and peace activist during the long years of forever wars, I recall bringing a similar resolution to the Select Board and to Town Meeting to call for an end to the war on Iraq, particularly with regard to bringing the Massachusetts National Guard home.

At that time the Board voted No Action and one prominent Board member was vocal about how she could not "stomach" a resolution that addressed the foreign policy our taxes pay for. However, later it was found that illegal underage drinking was taking place in her home and she evidently did not have an issue "stomaching" that.

It is estimated that between 280,771-315,190 Iraqis were killed by direct violence as a result of the invasion and occupation. According to the Massachusetts Fallen Heroes Memorial 301 Service Members were killed in the Global War on Terrorism.

It seems clear to me that these deaths have been considered worthwhile in general by society, despite the fact that no wars were won, that the violence was wanton and cruel, continuing for many years. In 2011 the U.S. departed Iraq due to the "Status of Forces Agreement" passed by the Iraqi Parliament. A pointless war, costing trillions of tax dollars, as well as the lives lost.

It is two decades later, a new series of conflicts has erupted in the Middle East. More than 33,000 people, mainly women and children in Gaza have been killed by Israeli and U.S. bombs since the brutal incursion by Hamas militants on October 7, 2023 into Israel. The conflicts are spiraling out of control and could easily lead not only to a wider war, but one in which nuclear powers (Israel is a nuclear power) begin to reach for these planet-destroying weapons.

Simply put, Planet Earth is facing a serious climate crisis, one that, to be solved, must mean that all wars and commerce of militarism (which uses tremendous amounts of oil) are ended. Yesterday would not be soon enough.

As ordinary people, we are placed in a difficult position, with many conflicting wishes and priorities. At the very least, vision and courage are needed to assess the whole picture, to understand that while there is always antisemitism, as there is always racism, to absolve a nation-state that is openly - even referring to human beings in Gaza as vermin - massacring a captive population in a revenge war is morally repugnant and restraints should be imposed by the global community of which we are a small part.

I hope that the Select Board of 2024 will do better than the Board of twenty years ago. It is good to learn from history, to not sidestep issues that cause discomfort and to take action out of a real concern for people who are being consigned to the dustbin of history before our eyes.

Please attach this letter to the agenda as a public comment. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Thea Paneth
28 Chandler St.
member, Arlington United for Justice with Peace

Please support CEASEFIRE resolution

Sanbonmatsu, John <js@wpi.edu>

Sun 4/21/2024 1:01 PM

To: Stephen DeCoursey <sdeCoursey@town.arlington.ma.us>; Len Diggins <ldiggins@town.arlington.ma.us>; Eric Helmuth <ehelmuth@town.arlington.ma.us>; John Hurd <jhurd@town.arlington.ma.us>; Diane Mahon <dmahon@town.arlington.ma.us>
Cc: SBAdmin <SBAdmin@town.arlington.ma.us>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside your organization. Exercise caution when opening attachments or clicking links, especially from unknown senders.

Dear Members of the Select Board:

Please attach this to the agenda as public comments.

I am writing, as a Jewish Arlington resident, to urge you to **support** a Town proclamation calling for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza. This is one of the most urgent issues of our time, and I am looking to *you* to make a difference in this debate for our community.

As an ethics professor and as a scholar who has studied genocides in Europe and in other contexts around the world, it is my opinion that Israel's policy towards the Palestinians is genocidal. In saying this, I am affirming the opinion of hundreds of other scholars in Holocaust and genocide studies, and international human rights law. The term "genocide" was developed in 1944 by the Polish-Jewish jurist Raphael Lemkin, to describe total war waged not against states or their armies, but against a civilian population. The aim of genocide is not necessarily to kill every single member of a victimized group, but to erase its collective identity through physical, psychological, and cultural destruction. I believe that this is what is occurring today in Gaza, and with the full participation of the United States government.

I am Japanese-American on my father's side and Jewish on my mother's. My maternal grandfather founded a Jewish temple in Connecticut, and I raised my son with a secular Jewish education at the Workmen's Circle (at one time, the largest Jewish organization in the US). In my scholarship and teaching, I draw on the work of such Jewish philosophers as Emmanuel Levinas and Martin Buber, as well as Jewish writers like Primo Levi and Isaac Bashevis Singer and filmmakers like Claude Lanzmann (director of *Shoah*, about the Holocaust). Despite all this, apologists for Israel's ongoing crimes in Gaza would characterize my criticisms of the Israeli state as "antisemitic." Here is a link to a clarifying debate in England several years ago about the absurd proposition that "Anti-Zionism = Anti-Semitism": https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1VTt_THL4A&t=720s.

I say all this by way of urging you not to be intimidated by those who conflate principled criticism of Israel and urgent defense of human rights with "antisemitism." To conflate critique of the Israeli state with "antisemitism" is dangerous for three reasons. First, because it silences people with legitimate humanitarian concerns about the vulnerability and safety of the millions of people at risk of imminent death in Gaza. Second, because it sets a bad precedent for our future ability to name state crimes, including the most serious of those crimes, genocide. Third, because it endangers Jews in the diaspora, by tarring them morally with the unjust policies of a state over which they have no control. Ironically, Zionist American Jews have a special responsibility to distance themselves from the heinous policies of the state they profess to love, because Judaism is an epic *moral* tradition, and Jewish chauvinism should have no place in it.

I condemn the indiscriminate nature of the October 7 attacks by Hamas on innocent Israeli civilians, as we all must. However, that attack (which incidentally killed half as many civilians as Israel killed during its 50-day war on Gazans in 2014) can in no way excuse Israel's actions since then, which are without question designed to destroy the Palestinians *as a people*. Since Oct. 7, Israel has engaged in the following war crimes and crimes against humanity:

- Starvation as a weapon of war--withholding of water, food, medicine, and fuel to 2.3 million people, half of them children.
- Indiscriminate mass bombing of densely populated urban neighborhoods and apartment complexes, including with 2000-pound bombs.
- Ethnic cleansing.
- Forced displacement of a civilian population.
- Killing of civilians in designated "safe zones."
- Use of white phosphorous against civilian targets.
- Bulldozing of displaced refugees in their tents.
- Bulldozing and desecration of cemeteries.
- Use of AI technology to intentionally kill entire families in their homes.
- Destruction of hospitals, medical clinics, ambulances, and physicians.
- Assassinations of journalists and their families.
- Destruction of universities and schools in Gaza.
- Sniping of unarmed civilians gathering food, of children, of nuns, of doctors.
- Summary executions of unarmed civilians waving white flags.

This is not a complete list. These and other crimes have been documented by dozens of organizations, including:

- The UN Office of Human Rights
- UNICEF
- Doctors without Borders
- Save the Children
- CARE
- Oxfam
- The Norwegian Refugee Center
- Amnesty International
- Human Rights Watch

Yet, tragically and outrageously, the Biden administration has continued to back Israel's crimes against humanity by rushing ever more ordnance and other materiel to Netanyahu, all the while cynically professing its "concern" about the "suffering" in Gaza. The US also continues to work closely with the IDF and Israeli intelligence to commit these atrocities. Despite the fact that the vast majority of Americans oppose US support for Israel's war on Gazan civilians, however, President Biden has remained immovable.

Hence my letter: I urgently appeal to the Select Board to support an Arlington Town resolution to join the hundreds of other communities across the United States in issuing an unequivocal statement condemning Israel's policies and calling for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire in Gaza, including the immediate, full restoration of water, food, medicine, and fuel to the territory. There are times when we must all step up and make our voices heard in the face of an absolute evil--and this is one of those times.

Sincerely,

John Sanbonmatsu, PhD
(100 Varnum Street, Arlington)

Associate Professor of Philosophy
Department of Humanities and Arts
Worcester Polytechnic Institute
js@wpi.edu
He/Him



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

Articles for Review:

Summary:

Article 2 Bylaw Amendment/Amend the Poet Laureate Screening Committee Membership



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

NEW BUSINESS

Summary:

Except in cases of emergency, the Board will neither deliberate nor act upon topics presented in New Business.



Town of Arlington, Massachusetts

Next Scheduled Meeting of Select Board May 6, 2024

Summary:

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: May 1, 2024 06:30 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Topic: Select Board Meeting

Register in advance for this webinar:

https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_KZIVfzAUSRO2NfHDW_MATw

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

During Town Meeting starting April 24, 2023 the Select Board will be in session from 8:00 p.m. until 11:00 p.m.

Notice to the Public on meeting privacy In the interests of preventing abuse of videoconferencing technology (i.e. Zoom Bombing) all participants, including members of the public, wishing to engage via the Zoom App must register for each meeting and will notice multi-step authentication protocols. Please allow additional time to join the meeting. Further, members of the public who wish to participate without providing their name may still do so by telephone dial-in information provided above.